■ METRO / A17

4 Waray-Waray kidnap gang members, including leader, killed in shootout

■ SPORTS / A21

Basketball sec-gen Graham Lim arrested, detained as illegal alien

■ NEWS / A2

Lacson, 3 opposition solons charge Garci with faking public documents, perjury

■ WORLD / A20

Moderate lawmaker is South Korea's first woman prime minister

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BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Saturday, March 25, 2006 ★★ 10 sections / Vol. 21 / No. 107 P18 website: www.inq7.net

High court rules lying basis for annulment of marriage

BASTA'T HUMAHABA NA ANG ILONG!

By Armand Nocum

THE FOLLOWING ARE grounds for annulment:

- One or both spouses are underage.
- One or both spouses are gay.
- One spouse has a habit of lying.

HIGH COURT/ A8

COA confirms Marcos money used in fertilizer scam

By Philip C. Tubeza

THE COMMISSION ON AUDIT HAS FOUND THAT part of the P100 million in recovered Marcos wealth intended for the government's controversial farm inputs program was used to buy fertilizer overpriced by a total of P42.4 million, Senate President Franklin Drilon said yesterday.

Drilon said preliminary results of the COA's

COA/ A9

Bernas: They are desperate

People's initiative faces legal obstacles

By Norman Bordadora, Christine O. Avendaño and TJ Burgonio, PDI Central Luzon, Northern Luzon Bureaus

A TOP CONSTITUTIONALIST, FR. JOAQUIN Bernas, said yesterday proponents of Charter change through a people's initiative were "probably desperate" in insisting on it despite serious constitutional and legal questions in its way.

"First, you need an enabling law. And even if there was, you can only use people's initiative to make specific changes to the Constitution," Bernas, one of the framers of the 1987 Charter, told the INQUIRER.

Chuckling, Bernas said: "I don't want to speculate ... They're probably desperate."

Bernas has said in various fora that a people's initiative may only be used to change specific provisions in the Constitution. A revision of the Constitution itself, he said, would have to be done through a constituent assembly

BERNAS/ A13

'GMA rating still down but a little less bad'

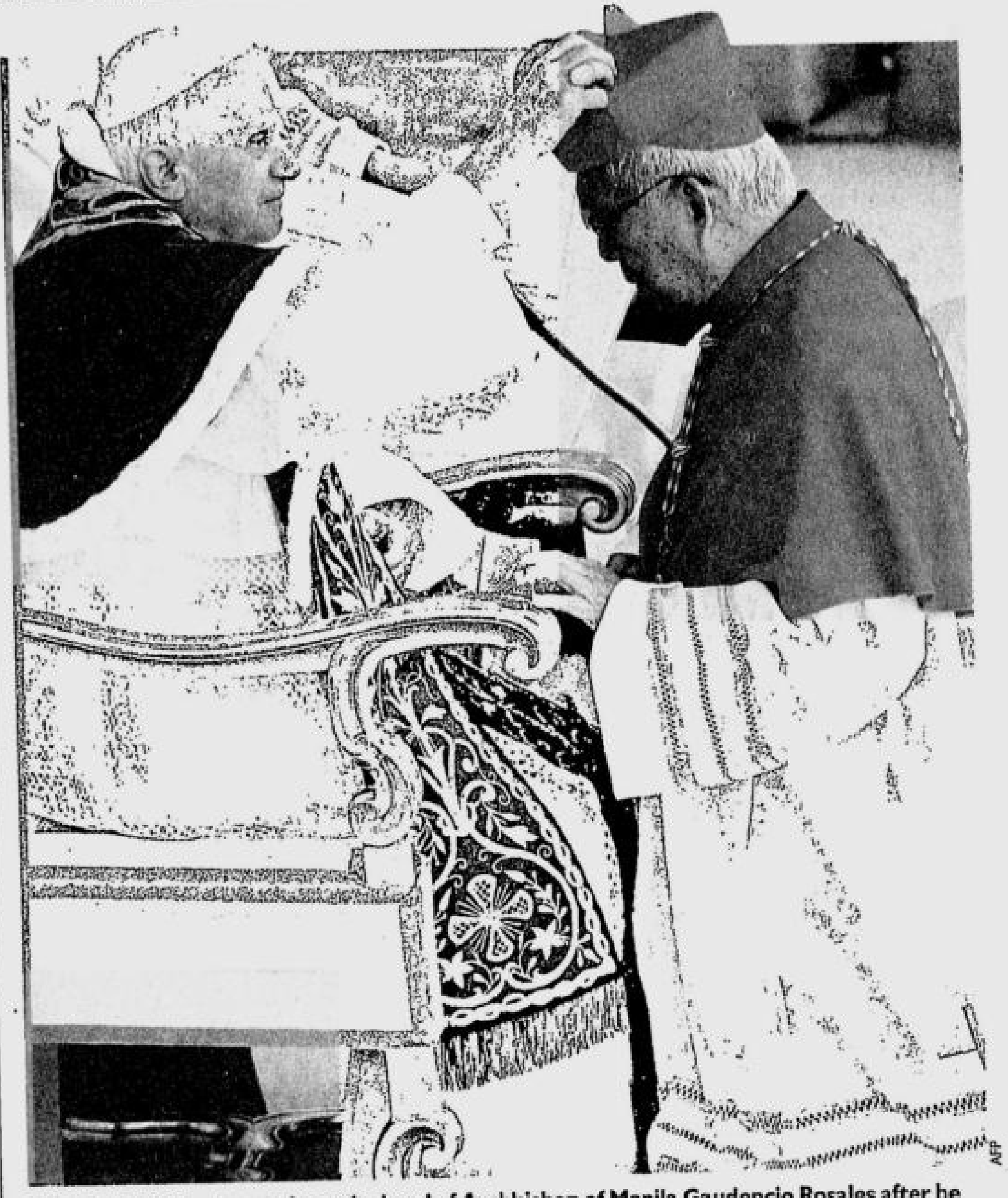
PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO HAS suffered a negative net satisfaction rating for the seventh quarter in a row, according to the Social Weather Stations.

But while still negative in the March 2006 survey, Ms Arroyo's new rating "is a little less bad than in December 2005," SWS said in a statement yesterday.

Her net satisfaction rating also improved among the *masa*, or the Class D sector, although it remained in the negative territory, the polling outfit said.

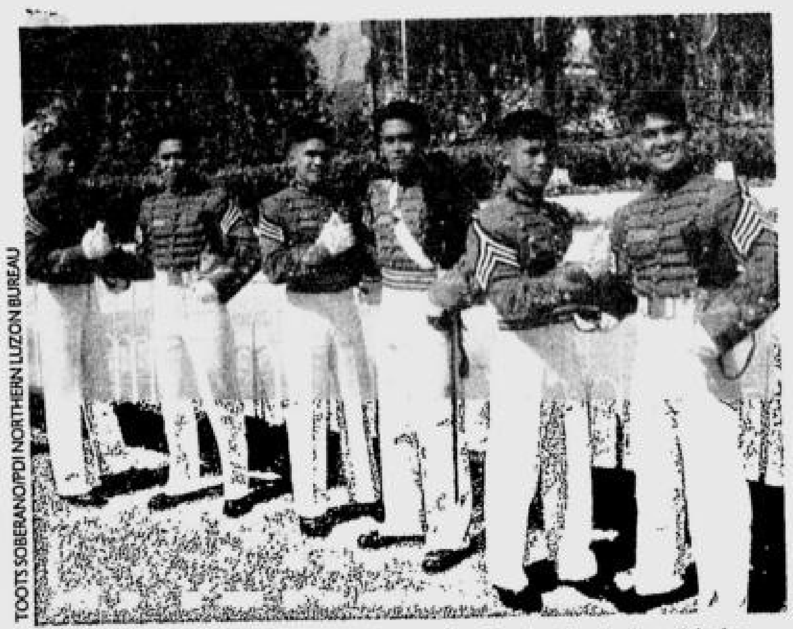
It said survey fieldwork was carried out after the presidentially proclaimed state of

GMA RATING/ A13


AFP

THE RED HAT rests snugly on the head of Archbishop of Manila Gaudencio Rosales after he receives it from Pope Benedict XVI at the consistory on Friday at St. Peter's Square at the Vatican. Rosales was one of 15 new cardinals from around the world.

Palace: To kill GMA at PMA real threat


TOOTS SOBERANO/PDI NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU

BAND OF BROTHERS, none of them twins. Graduating today with the PMA Class of 2006 are (from left) brothers Joseph Orland and Michael Gotong; Cesar and Jomar Canazares and Randy and Romel Sotero.

By Dona Pazzibugan and Christine O. Avendaño

WHO DOES ONE BELIEVE?

Malacañang yesterday said the threat to assassinate President Macapagal-Arroyo, possibly when she attends the Philippine Military Academy graduation exercises today, is real.

The Armed Forces Public Information Unit, on the other hand, said the military has not received any specific threat.

Whatever is the case, military forces went on a nationwide red alert on the eve of the PMA commencement exercises in Baguio City.

Plans for Ms Arroyo's security were stepped up as officials said they were not taking chances in the wake of the foiled Feb. 24 plot by elite troops to withdraw support from their Commander in Chief.

AFP PIO chief Col. Tristan Kison said the security preparations were prompted by the so-called "Oplan Hackle"—a supposed plan by

PALACE/ A8

Call him Gaudencio Cardinal Rosales

MANILA ARCHBISHOP GAUDENCIO BORBON Rosales yesterday became a member of the elite College of Cardinals, joining 14 others from around the world, including two other Asians, as the new "princes" of the Church who will be advisers to Pope Benedict XVI and choose his successor.

From this point on, the soft-spoken Rosales, 73, will have the title "Cardinal" between his first and last names.

He is now the Philippines' only active cardinal, Ricardo Cardinal Vidal having retired last February. Jose Cardinal Sanchez, 86, retired in 1996 although he is still based in the Roman Curia where he had served as Prefect of the Congregation for the Clergy.

Rosales, who heads Asia's biggest diocese, the Metropolitan See of Manila, identified "the evangelization of Asia" as "the challenge of our times."

He told the Catholic Asianews agency it was thus significant that the Pope had chosen to elevate himself and two other Asians—Archbishop Nicholas Cheong Jin-suk of Seoul and Hong Kong Bishop Joseph Zen, an outspoken campaigner for religious freedom and critic of China.

He told AP Television News that the decision by Benedict to name three new Asian cardinals showed that Asia was important to the Church, home to two-thirds of the world's population

CALL/ A5

Three sets of brothers among 324 graduates

By Frank Cimatu
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

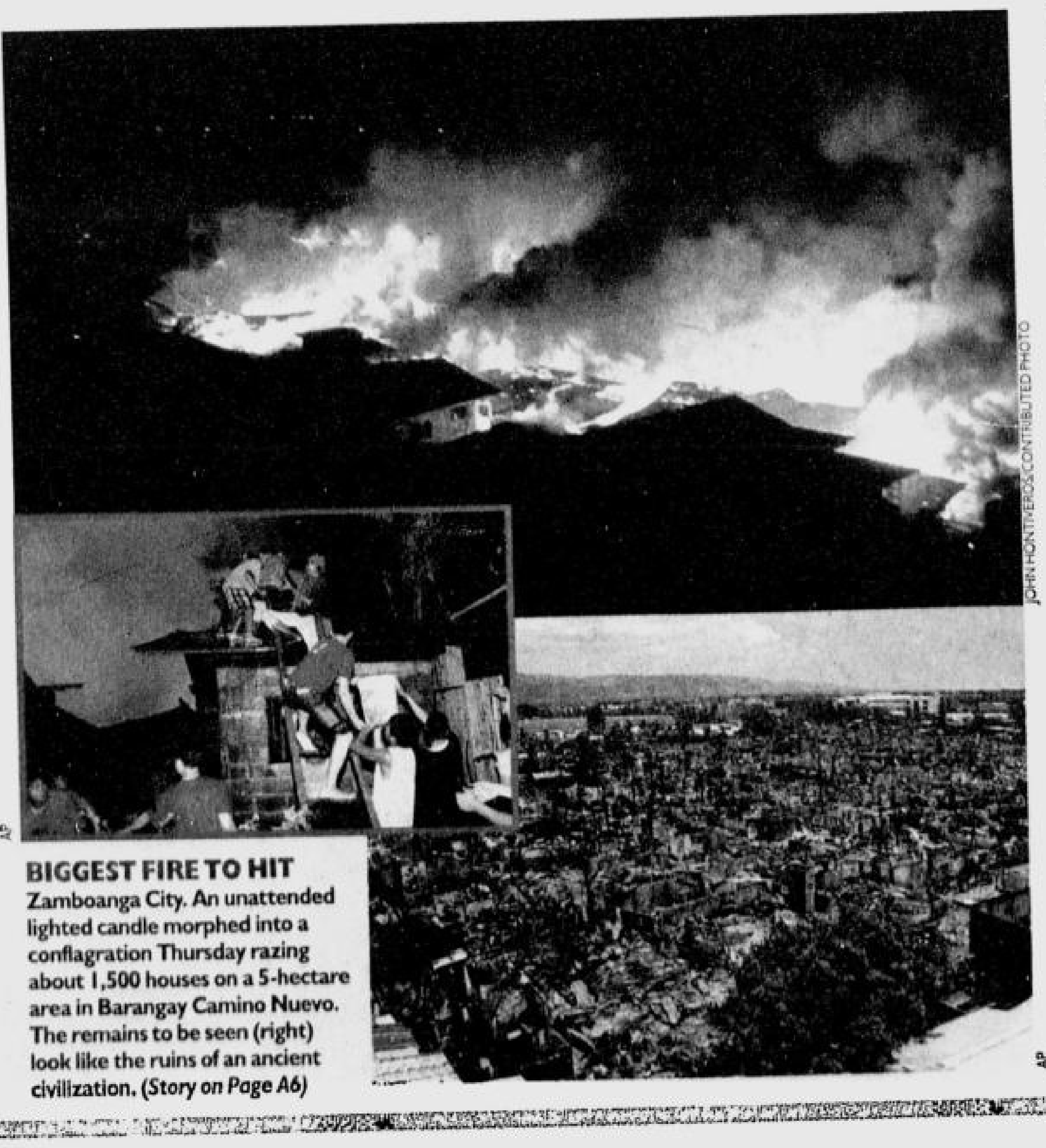
FORT DEL PILAR, BAGUIO City—The television mini series "Band of Brothers" takes on a literal meaning when the Philippine Military Academy Mandala Class of 2006 graduates today.

The class has three pairs of brothers graduating today: Cadets First Class Randy and Romel Sotero of La Trinidad, Benguet; Joseph Orland and Michael Gotong, also of La Trinidad; and Cesar and Jomar Cañazares of Tuguegarao City.

None of them are twins.

Romel Sotero, who ranked third in the 324-member class, and Michael Gotong, who ranked fifth, are the oldest, having been born in 1982. Joseph Orland Gotong and Jomar Cañazares were born in 1982, while Randy Sotero

THREE/ A8


JOHN HONTIVEROS/CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

BIGGEST FIRE TO HIT Zamboanga City. An unattended lighted candle morphed into a conflagration Thursday razing about 1,500 houses on a 5-hectare area in Barangay Camino Nuevo. The remains to be seen (right) look like the ruins of an ancient civilization. (*Story on Page A6*)

RP battle against top killer TB a success

By Volt Contreras and Christian V. Esguerra

THE PHILIPPINES HAS MADE "substantial progress" in the battle against tuberculosis, a poverty-related killer disease that claims two million lives worldwide, according to local and foreign experts who marked World TB Day yesterday.

The number of new TB cases detected nationwide each year dropped to 133 cases per 100,000 Filipinos in 2005, from 240 in 1997, according to officials of the Stop TB Partnership, a network under the auspices of the World Health Organization.

Dr. Giorgio Roscigno, an Italian TB specialist and member of the STBP executive committee, led the Philippine launch of the

RP BATTLE/ A6

Religious set guidelines for victims of repression

By Christian V. Esguerra

THE COUNTRY'S INFLUENTIAL religious congregations are ready to provide help for the victims of what they described as the "repressive measures" under the administration of President Macapagal-Arroyo.

The Association of Major Religious Superiors of the Philippines (AMRSP) on Thursday began circulating a set of guidelines for its members at this time of unresolved political crisis.

The AMRSP has more than 360 congregations including the Jesuits, Franciscans, Dominicans, Benedictines, Augustinians and Lasallian Brothers.

The AMRSP played a crucial role during the years of the Marcos dictatorship when it was founded. That time, it opened the doors of its seminaries and convents to provide safe haven to victims of political repression.

The AMRSP agreed to reactivate this role during a

RELIGIOUS/ A5

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Eastern sections of Visayas and Mindanao will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and isolated thunderstorms. The rest of the country will have partly cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers or thunderstorms.

SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY KATE PEDROSO, PDI RESEARCH/03/24/06

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Partly Cloudy
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Partly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Cebu	Partly Cloudy
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Partly Cloudy
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Partly Cloudy
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

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Second FRONTPAGE

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Garci charged for fake passport

By DJ Yap and Michael Lim Ubac

VIRGILIO GARCILLANO WAS YESTERDAY ACCUSED of faking his passport and perjuring himself during the House inquiry into the "Hello Garci" election fraud scandal.

Sen. Panfilo Lacson and three opposition congressmen lodged charges of perjury, falsification of public document and violation of the Passport Act against the former election commissioner at the Quezon City prosecutor's office. They filed the seven-page complaint on the strength of a Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas finding that Garcillano's passport did not conform to standard on six counts.

The three other complainants are Taguig Rep. Alan Peter Cayetano, Bukidnon Rep. Teofisto Guingona III and Rep. Joel Villanueva of the party-list group Citizens' Battle Against Crime and Corruption (Cibac).

"This only shows that old habits die hard. Anyone who's used to doctoring election returns and paraphernalia can also learn how to fake passports," Cayetano said.

"We want Garcillano now to disprove allegations that he indeed left the country for Singapore, London and other parts of the world" at the height of the "Hello Garci" scandal, Lacson said.

At the House, Speaker Jose de Venecia urged the Department of Justice to throw the book at the 68-year-old Garcillano.

"I call on the [DOJ] to order the National Bureau of Investigation to determine probable cause and, if warranted, file necessary charges – perjury, falsification of public documents, or both – against him," De Venecia said.

He said the NBI should step in posthaste because the House had "no prosecutorial powers."

"We can only facilitate procedure by submitting to the proper agencies the documents and transcripts submitted during the course of the congressional hearings," the Speaker said.

Inescapable conclusion

When he finally showed up at a joint House inquiry late last year, Garcillano denied that he was out of the country from July to August 2005 to escape the investigation on his supposed wiretapped conversations with President Macapagal-Arroyo suggesting fraud in the 2004 presidential election.

He presented two passports – both with no entries – to prove that he was in the country the whole time the "Hello Garci" scandal was raging.

But a BSP examination report dated March 20 found that one of Garcillano's passports (No. JJ243816) did not conform to standard.

Lacson and the three congressmen said the BSP report, which they attached to their complaint, pointed to "the inescapable conclusion" that the passport was "fake."

They also attached a copy of a note verbale issued by Singapore's Ministry of Foreign Affairs on Aug. 31, 2005, stating that Garcillano arrived in the city-state on July 14, 2005, aboard a Lear Jet 35 and left the next day for London.

They said Garcillano "willfully and knowingly" used the fake passport "to mislead Congress and the Filipino people."

Disbarment

Lacson said he and the other complainants would also start disbarment proceedings against Garcillano before the Integrated Bar of the Philippines.

Asked who else could be responsible for the fake passport, Lacson said: "Well, who's the party in interest here? Who stands to benefit from the coverup of Garcillano's actions in the last election? Your guess is as good as mine.

"My guess is Malacañang. All the events, all the incidents, point to at least a contrived act between some people in Malacañang and Garcillano."

Cayetano said the House committees that conducted the "Hello Garci" inquiry should have been more "aggressive" in uncovering the truth.

He raised the option of reopening the hearings and holding Garcillano in contempt until the latter "told the truth."

Villanueva said the opposition had to go to court "to bring back justice in our laws."

"We will use it as it is supposed to be used – to find the truth, to bring justice, to protect our people. At least for once, Malacañang agrees with the Filipino people that Commissioner Garcillano should be jailed for fraud and for cheating on all of us," said the son of Jesus is Lord evangelist Bro. Eddie Villanueva, an also-ran in the 2004 presidential election.

Senate, too

The Senate also wants to summon Garcillano, as well as foreign affairs and immigration officials, to its own "Hello Garci" inquiry.

Senate President Franklin Drilon said he had recommended this to Sen. Rodolfo Biazon, who chairs the national defense committee conducting the inquiry.

"The authenticity or forgery of the Garcillano passport has to be established," Drilon said, adding:

"This is a terrible episode. Garci could not have done this alone. This is a grand conspiracy involving [him], those who secured the fraudulent passport, the pilots, and the immigration officers who cleared his flight.

"For whose benefit was this conspiracy hatched? Who benefited from this conspiracy? It's not Garci alone."

Biazon is "receptive" to the idea of summoning Garcillano and certain officials, according to Drilon.

The committee chair has indicated that he would resume the inquiry once Executive Order No. 464 is lifted. The order bars administration, police and military officials from appearing in congressional hearings without the President's say-so. *With a report from TJ Burgonio*

Can't use Ping's word against Erap, says Digs

By Leila B. Salaverria

SEN. PANFILO LACSON'S CLAIM THAT FORmer President Joseph Estrada had been aware that jueteng money was used to fund his pet project could not be used against the latter, according to former Rep. Didagen Dilangalen.

Dilangalen, Estrada's former spokesperson, said the former president and the Erap Muslim Youth Foundation were two separate entities. Estrada did not get the jueteng money, he added.

"The personality of the foundation is different from the personality of Erap. Erap said the money is there, I did not take it. Did he pocket it? No. He said that if he did, would he have (tried to) legalize jueteng?" Dilangalen said in the Ambassador Hotel forum.

Estrada, who is currently detained while being tried on plunder charges, was accused by Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson of receiving illegal gambling payoffs and getting a P130-million kickback from the tobacco excise tax.

Singson's accusation led to Estrada's aborted impeachment trial, which triggered a mass uprising that prompted Estrada's ouster in 2001.

On Wednesday, Estrada took the witness stand for the first time and denied all the accusations against him. On the same day, Lacson said Estrada had been aware of jueteng money going to his foundation.

When asked about the possibility of Lacson's statements being used in the case against Estrada, Dilangalen expressed doubt.

"No way, that could not be used. No matter how they try to squeeze it, even if you ask Ping Lacson, he would say the same thing. The money did not go to Erap, it went to the foundation. The money is intact," he said.

Dilangalen refused to disclose what he believes is Lacson's motive for issuing the statement about the Erap Muslim Youth Foundation on the same day of Estrada's testimony.

Yesterday, administration solons urged Lacson to tell all on what he knows of Estrada's jueteng dealings during his incumbency to help put a closure to the issue.

Rep. Antonio Cuenco of Cebu City, chair of the House committee on foreign affairs, and Joel Mayo Almario of Davao Oriental, chair of the committee on games and amusement, said while Lacson's motive for revealing Estrada's jueteng take was unclear, they said the senator had wittingly dragged himself into the fray.

Cuenco said it was time for Lacson to unravel the complete picture of how Estrada coddled jueteng lords during his incumbency. "Ping kept his silence for too long. It's time for him to detail how Erap coddled and protected jueteng operations."

"Whatever his motive in bringing up the matter, Ping should provide more details to help bring the jueteng issue confronting Erap to its proper conclusion," Almario said.

Meanwhile, Estrada lawyer Rufus Rodriguez decried the lack of live coverage on Estrada's testimony.

He said the accusations against Estrada during the impeachment trial were televised, but not his defense.

Rodriguez also said that by his assessment, Estrada had been candid and sincere during his testimony, and had been forthright and spontaneous in answering questions.

SC scolds petitioners vs EO 464

By Armand N. Nocum

STUNG BY CRITICISMS THAT IT WAS DELAYing decision on crucial issues affecting civil liberties, the Supreme Court yesterday reprimanded the petitioners against Executive Order 464 for asking for numerous extensions on their deadline to submit their comments to the high court.

In a two-page resolution, the court reprimanded petitioner groups Bayan Muna, Courage and the Counsel for the Defense of Civil Liberties (Codal) for asking the SC at least twice for more time to submit their comments.

The extensions have delayed the resolution of the petitions questioning the constitutionality of EO 464 which bars Cabinet men and military officials from attending congressional hearings without the prior approval of the President.

But on March 14, the court noted that the petitioners eventually said they were not filing their comments "in the interest of having the issues resolved soonest."

"To ask for additional time from the court, only to manifest later that the act for which additional time was requested will no longer be done, is to trifle with the court and to make light of the proceedings being conducted by it," the court said.

"The fault of the petitioners ... is rendered all the more serious in view of the gravity of the issues involved in the present case," the court added.

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4 Raffle draw will be aired on May 14, 2006 at the Sunday Mall Show on IBC-13 between 1:00 to 2:00 PM, witnessed by a DOH BFAD representative
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6 Prizes are tax paid and not convertible to cash
7 Winners can only win once. If a participant wins more than once, he/she gets the prize with higher value
8. Names of winners will be published in a major newspaper (Phil. Star). Winners will be notified via registered mail as to when and where they will claim their prizes
9 To claim prize, winners must present a valid I.D. with photo (e.g. driver's license, passport, SSS ID) and registered notice
10 Redemption period shall be within 60 days from the receipt of notification letter. Prizes not claimed within 60 days after notification will be forfeited in favor of Yihrong Trading Corp. upon approval from DOH BFAD
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DOH-BFAD Permit No. 0231, Series of 2006

Now, Palace wants Senate to act fast on 2006 budget

By Christine O. Avendaño

FOLLOWING ITS APPROVAL BY the House, Malacañang now expects the Senate to act swiftly on the much-delayed passage of the P1.06 trillion national budget for 2006.

"I commend the House of Representatives for the passage of the budget and we anticipate the expeditious action of the Senate on the measure," President Macapagal-Arroyo said yesterday.

On Thursday, the House finally approved the 2006 national budget. It has been conducting marathon sessions on the budget proposals of different departments and their attached agencies since March 6.

"This marks payback time for the people as we move governance to a higher level at a time of growing political stability," President Arroyo said in a statement.

The P1.06 trillion 2006 budget is the biggest ever submitted by a President to Congress for approval. It is 14.7 percent or P134.7 billion bigger than the 2005 budget. Roughly one-third, or P340 billion, will go to interest payments for the country's debts.

Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye urged the Senate to join the House in "fulfilling their constitutional duty of reviewing and approving the annual budget of the entire government."

The passage of the budget bill in the House, Bunye said "disproves unfounded allegations based on politically-motivated fears on why the budget approval is taking such a long time."

In a statement, Ms Arroyo said the passage of the budget "will lend momentum to our economic gains as it sends a strong signal to the world of our capability to further balance our fiscal footing and earmark the fruits of economic reform to the basic needs of our people."

"We are keyed in to enhanced governance, more investment confidence, jobs, broader infrastructure and better social services "as we strike out political instability and gather momentum for political change," the President said.

PNP files raps against 4 officers

By Luige A. del Puerto

POLICE HAVE FORMALLY charged with grave misconduct four officers of the elite police combat unit Special Action Force (SAF) who were implicated in the alleged Feb. 24 coup attempt against the Arroyo administration, a senior police official said yesterday.

Police Director Marcelo Ele, chief of the Directorate for Investigation and Detective Management, said those charged with grave misconduct were former SAF chief Supt. Marcelino Franco, Sr. Supt. Benjamin Magalong, Chief Insp. Eric Dilag, and Insp. Ryan Paloma.

"It's similar to the court-martial proceedings recommended by the AFP against officers (implicated)," said Ele.

Franco has since retired from the service. But Magalong, Dilag and Paloma have been under "restrictive custody" since late February when Ms Arroyo placed the country under a state of emergency.

Although technically not detained, their movements are being monitored. They also cannot leave the camp without escorts.

According to Ele, the DIDM transmitted this week the precharge documents against the SAF 4 to a hearing officer from the Police Community Relations Group. Ele said he expected the summary administration proceedings against them to start anytime soon.

If proven guilty, the officers could be dismissed from the service. Franco could also lose his retirement benefits, according to Ele.

The police have retained jurisdiction over Franco even though he retired early this month.

But the police have so far failed to obtain sworn statements from police inside and outside the PNP-SAF against their four colleagues.

A junior policeman familiar with the case said no one wants to pin down the officers.

The DIDM, nonetheless, has found "probable cause" to go ahead and file the charges on the basis on various reports implicating the SAF officers.

"(But) if in the course of the administrative proceedings we would uncover evidence that will warrant the filing of criminal charges, we would do so," Ele said, adding that criminal charges would be filed with the regular courts.

Last week, Ele admitted that without sworn affidavits implicating the SAF 4, the police's case is "a little weak."

"We have found probable cause, based on reports, on the preponderance of reports (of their involvement)," Ele earlier said. "But we have no sworn statements (against them). The case is a little weak."

"But we are not prohibited from submitting (additional) evidence during trial," Ele added.

Police chief Arturo Lomibao earlier said part of the plan to unseat the Arroyo government was for the SAF to takeover Camp Crame and the Ninoy Aquino International Airport.

ADVISORY

8 Waves Waterpark and Hotel will be closed to the public for a corporate function on March 25 and April 1. For further details regarding the waterpark's availability, please visit www.8waveswaterpark.com.ph

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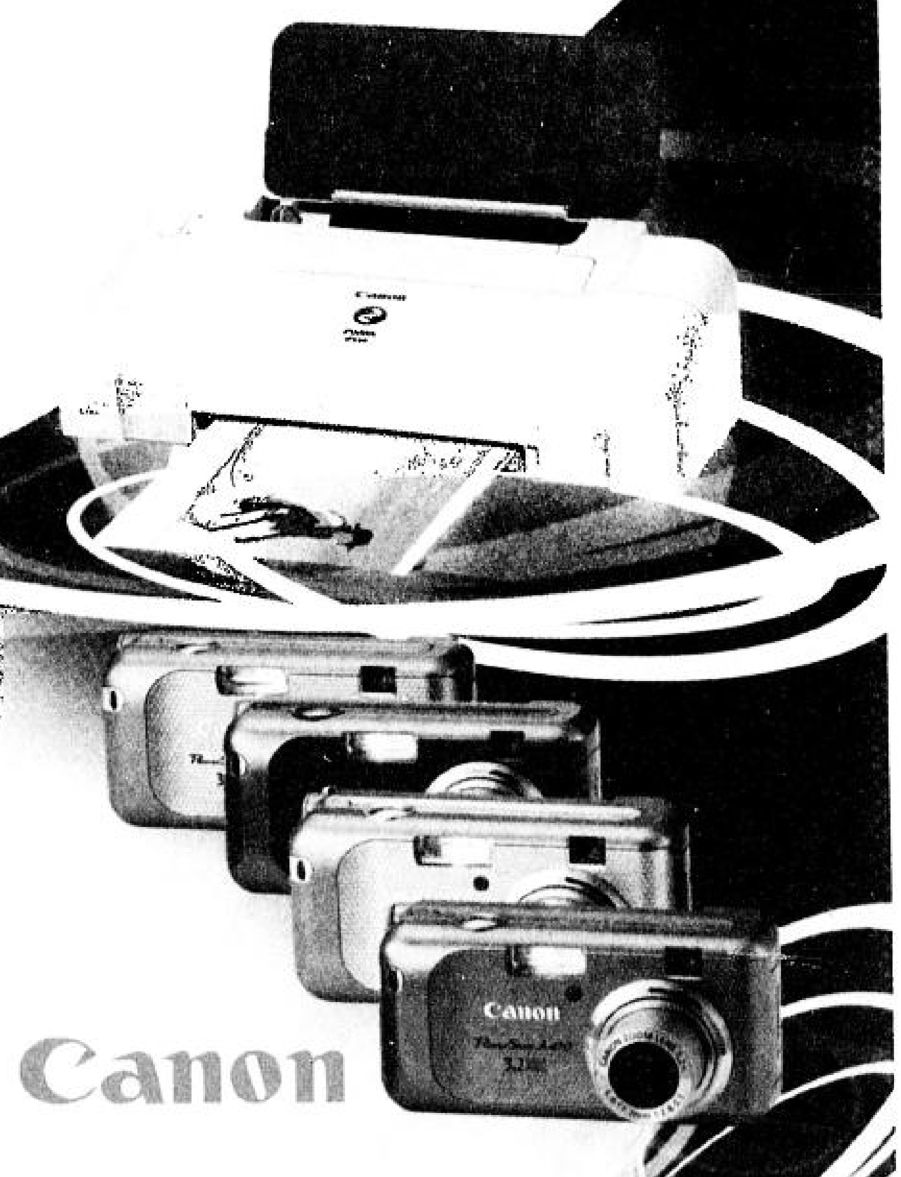

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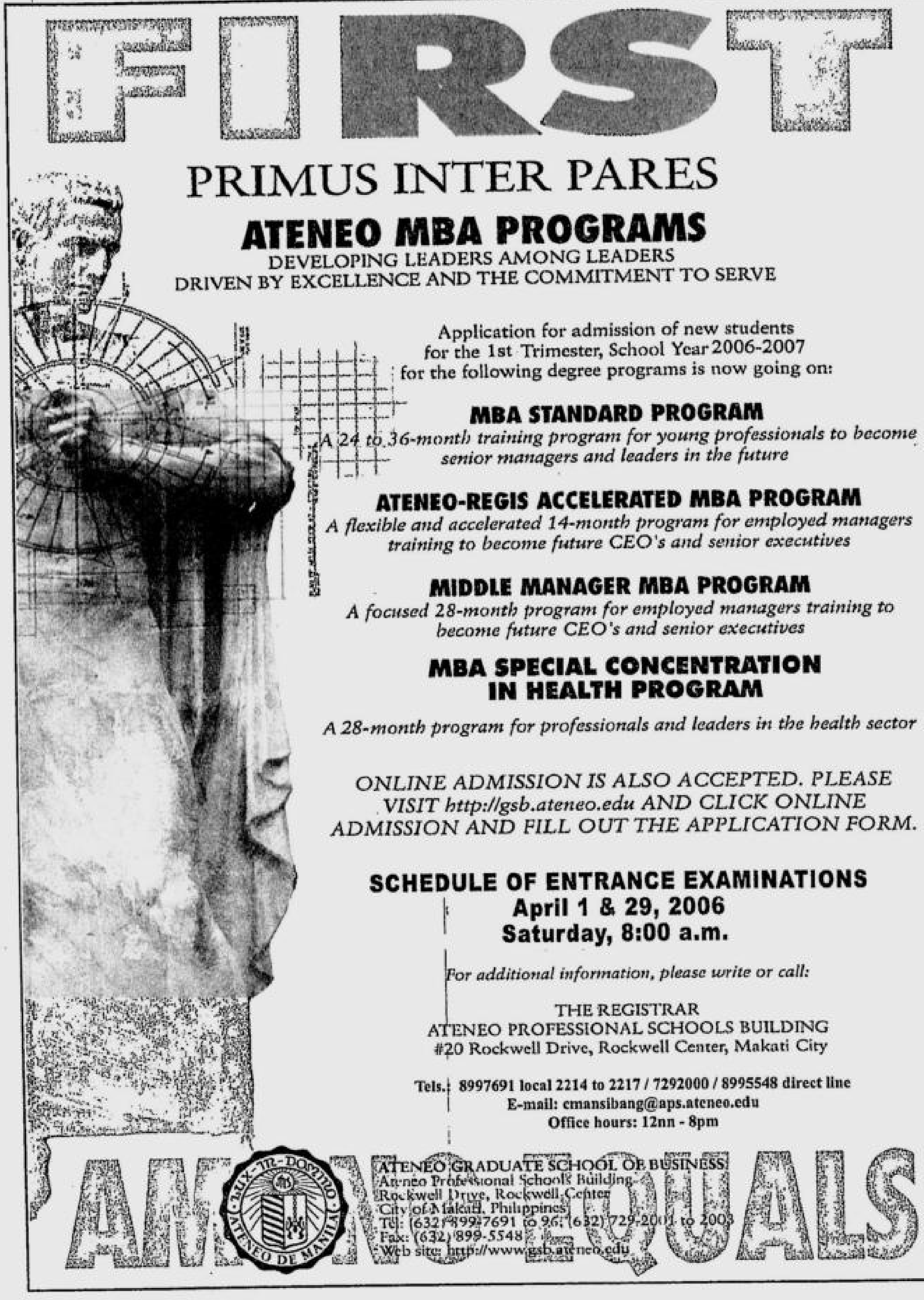

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DENR watching mines for rain-induced disasters

By Blanche S. Rivera

THE GOVERNMENT WILL KEEP A CLOSE watch on mining projects in the country as part of its disaster mitigation plan for the onset of the La Niña season.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources, chair of the national committee on disaster mitigation, said it would closely monitor the tailings ponds of mining projects as heavy rains brought by the La Niña phenomenon could trigger overflows.

In his memo to the President, Environment Secretary Angelo T. Reyes said the DENR would also "undertake saturated anti-illegal logging operations" as part of its disaster mitigation plan.

Of the 24 priority mining projects, only four are operational: the Palawan Nickel Project, Rapu-Rapu Polymetallic Project, Teresa Gold Project and the Sto. Tomas II Copper Project in Canatuan.

Reyes' memo came as environmentalists warned against more mine tailings spills during the La Niña period, citing the two incidents at the Rapu-Rapu Polymetallic Mining Project in Albay last year.

"If the rains are too strong, the chances of spilling are great. Remember what happened to Lafayette?" Angelina P. Galang, dean of Miriam College's Environmental Studies Institute said in an interview.

Australian firm Lafayette Mining Corp., which operates the Rapu-Rapu Polymetallic Project, was responsible for two mine spills in October and November last year.

Lafayette said the incidents were technically not a spill because it had deliberately released the waste water from its tailings ponds. Its dams could no longer hold the volume due to the amount of rainwater that mixed with mine tailings.

The waste water discharge caused cyanide contamination in the nearby creeks and has been blamed for the fish kill in Rapu-Rapu

The DENR suspended the operation of Lafayette's gold processing plant and fined the firm P10.7 million for violating the Clean Water Act.

Lafayette, however, announced the other day that it was set to resume operations mid-April because it would have complied with the DENR requirements by then. But antimining groups said they would oppose the resumption of Lafayette's gold milling operations.

But yesterday, Lafayette announced that its Rapu Rapu polymetallic project will only operate once it has completed all the required remedial measures and gets the go-signal from the government.

Carlos G. Dominguez, company president and chair, said in a statement issued yesterday that he hoped its re-start would not be conditioned on the findings of an independent commission chaired by Bishop Arturo Bastes of Sorsogon. Rapu Rapu is in Albay.

"The government should consider allowing us to re-start when we become fully compliant because the best way for the commission to find out if we really caused anything is to monitor us while we are operating," he added.

That way, he said, the host communities would start benefiting as well. The project is expected to generate directly and indirectly hundreds of local jobs. It also expects to spend at least P320 million per year for local purchases, including groceries, fish, meat and other supplies.

The project is now in the process of completing all remedial measures required to ensure its systems and processes fully meet local and international standards for responsible mining operations. "Hopefully all other issues would not affect us," he said.

GMA lunches with taipans

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO YESTERday held a private lunch meeting at the Palace with the next generation taipans who have remained bullish on the country's business prospects despite the prevailing political crisis.

"We'd like to have a better political climate, but we can live with what is happening today," said Jose B. Antonio special envoy to China and chair of the Philippine China Business Council (PCBC) which arranged the meeting.

In a phone interview, Antonio said politics was not discussed during the luncheon meeting as both host and guests focused on business matters.

Present during the lunch meeting were the sons of the taipans: Henry Sy Jr., Lance Gokongwei and Alfred Ty; Joselito Campos of Unilab and Del Monte; Carlson Chan of snack maker Oishi; Willy Tan of Luen Thai Group, one of the country's largest garments exporter; and Eduardo Delgado of Delbros.

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Call him Gaudencio Cardinal Rosales

From page A1

as well as economic powerhouses.

"I thank God because we are being acknowledged in the whole world," he said. "The Philippines was considered to be the only Catholic country in Asia, but it is not any more. Now smaller countries are too, like Timor and Korea."

Decked out for the first time in their crimson robes, the beaming new cardinals processed onto the steps of St. Peter's Basilica at the Vatican to applause from a crowd of thousands in the square below. Security was tight around the square, with uniformed and plainclothes police ringing the area.

The Pope opened the colorful ceremony, known as a consistory, by reading out each of the new cardinals' names in Latin, drawing applause after he pronounced each one.

He then proceeded to hand over to them the symbols of their high office. The newly elevated cardinals knelt before the Pope for his blessing, and received a red *zucchetto*, or skull cap, and the three-cornered scarlet hat called a *biretta* to wear over it.

Cardinals traditionally wear red to show that they are ready to shed their blood in defense of the faith.

The Pope will wind up the consistory today with a special Mass to be concelebrated with the new cardinals at the St. Peter's Basilica, during which the new cardinals will get their rings of office and also be named titular head of a church in Rome.

Not easy

Being cardinal cannot be easy for Rosales who is 17 months away from reaching the canonical retirement age of 75.

Cardinals are always on call whenever the Pope decides to call an "extraordinary consistory," or the gathering of cardinals to advise him on specific issues confronting the Church. The ordinary consistory happens when new cardinals are appointed.

Rosales, who is quietly active in poverty alleviation programs in his vast diocese, is also likely to receive more assignments at the Curia, the Vatican bureaucracy.

"You enter into a special relationship with the chief shepherd of the universal Church as a companion, cooperator, assistant and counselor," he told reporters before leaving for Rome last week.

The prelate is also active in environmental concerns and the formation of the local clergy.

He has been heading the 'Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines' Episcopal Commission on the Clergy for many years.

"Thank God I have bishops helping me," he said. "We have clinics, seminars, all kinds of things for the sake of our brother priests."

Well-wishers

After yesterday's ceremony, the new cardinals were each assigned a room at the Vatican in which to receive lines of diplomats and well-wishers, one of the rare occasions when the hallowed halls of the Vatican are opened to the public.

Filipino migrants, priests and other members of the religious in Italy will be given a chance to be with Rosales tomorrow during a thanksgiving Mass at the Santa Maria Maggiore Church.

Before returning to Manila on March 30, Rosales will have an audience with the Pope together with other Filipino bishops, priests and lay people.

A thanksgiving Mass has been scheduled at 10 a.m. on April 1 at the Manila Cathedral.

Benedict announced on Feb. 22 that he was naming the new cardinals, 12 of whom are under age 80 and thus eligible to vote in a conclave.

Following yesterday's ceremony, the College of Cardinals rose to a total of 193, bringing the body that will elect the Pope to 120. They represent the first-chosen of the post-John Paul II era. Before the new appointments, all but one—William Baum of Washington—had been appointed by Benedict's late predecessor.

Europe has most cardinals

Europe will still have the vast majority of cardinals at 100, 60 of whom are of voting age. Latin America is next with 20 voting-age cardinals, followed by North America with 16. Asia has 13, Africa nine and Oceania two.

While electing a pontiff is the primary task of cardinals, they are also called on to advise the Pope on governing his 1.1 billion-strong flock.

On the eve of the consistory, Benedict summoned the entire College of Cardinals, including its newest members, for a daylong retreat and asked them to give him advice on pressing issues such as relations with Islam and reconciling with an ultraconservative group whose bishops were excommunicated two decades ago.

Church's universality

The new cardinals, representing 11 countries in five continents, reflect "the universality of the Church," Benedict said when he announced the nominations last month.

"In fact, they come from every part of the world and carry out diverse duties in service to the people of God," the Pope said. *AP, AFP and Christian V. Esguerra*

Religious set guidelines for victims of repression

From page A1

closed-door meeting at Xavier University more than two weeks ago.

Titled "Guidelines for an AMRSP Common Response to Present Situation," the document explicitly throws the group's support behind victims of repression under the present administration.

Concern for victims

"Our spontaneous concern goes to those who bear the weight of this repression; those who have been intimidated, whose rights have been trampled upon, those who out of fear become victims of harassment, violence, arrest and detention for no reason at all.

As always those who suffer most are the defenseless poor," the group said in the guidelines.

In the guidelines, the AMRSP described as "repressive measures" the calibrated preemptive response policy against anti-Arroyo protests, Executive Order No. 464 and Presidential Proclamation No. 1017, saying they "have caused confusion, fear and unrest."

"We cannot watch with indifference the unfolding of the events reminiscent of the martial law days," it said.

Chilling atmosphere

"The chilling atmosphere has crept within the cloistered walls. We find ourselves sharing the confusion of our people faced with continuing threats to freedom, situations of fear and violence and the contradictory pronouncement of the government that all is well."

The document instructs possible victims of "invitation, harassment, stalking, arrest, detention, (and) violation of human rights" by the Philippine National Police and the Armed Forces to report to the Task Force Detainees of the Philippines.

Phone nos. of 11 lawyers

It also contains the contact numbers of 11 lawyers and law offices available to receive similar complaints. Among them are the Ateneo Human Rights Center, University of the Philippines Institute of Human Rights, Free Legal Assistance Group and the Sanidad Law Office.

The numbers of five stations of the Central Police District, including the Camp Caringal Headquarters, were also included, ostensibly to allow religious superiors to easily get in touch with the PNP in case of complaints.

Overcome fear

The AMRSP urged its members to "overcome fear," noting that "a repressive regime thrives on fear (so) let us not allow ourselves to be intimidated."

"Aware of our rights, we cannot be cowed by anyone. No proclamation—legal or illegal—can take away our rights," it said.

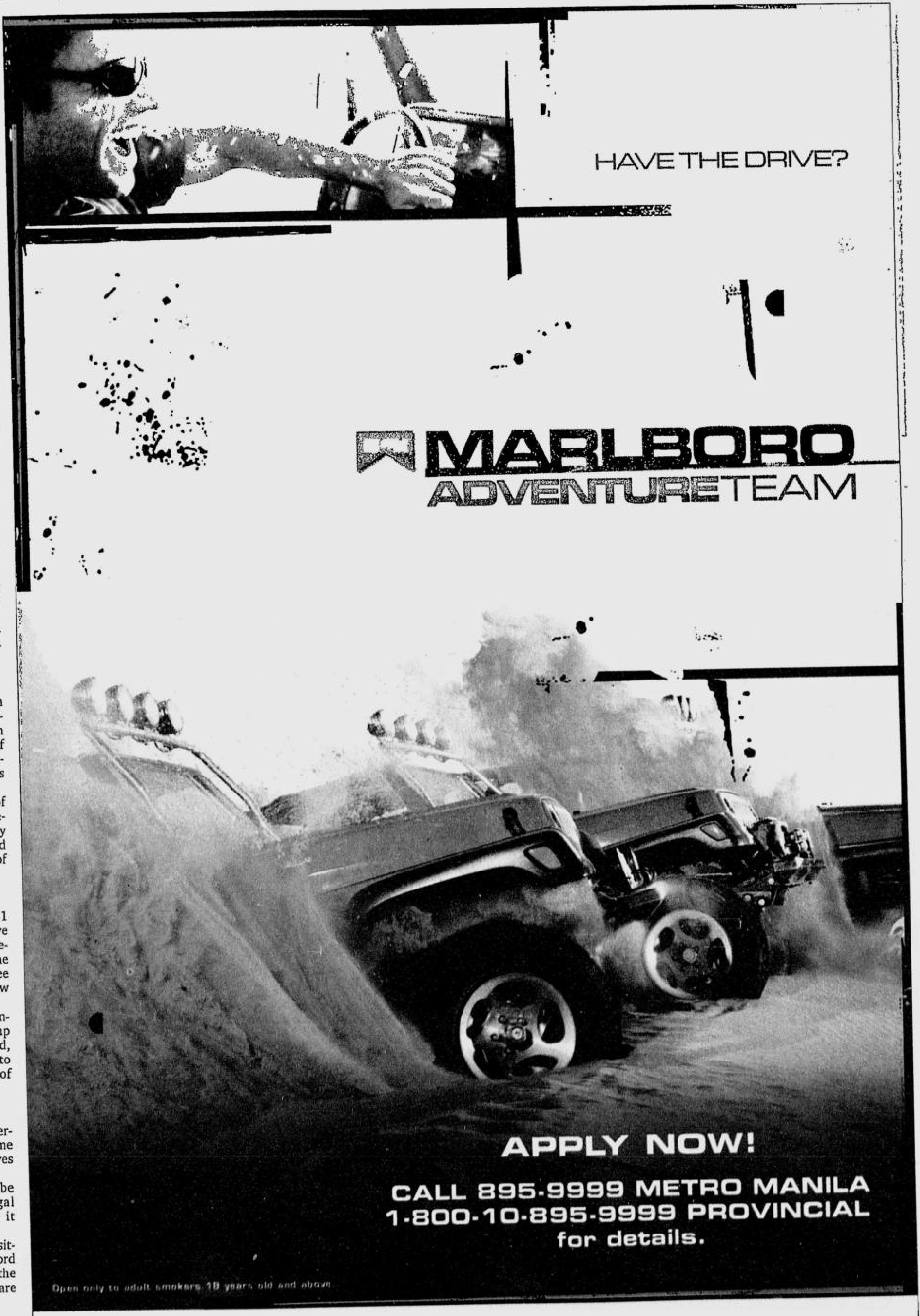
"(Let us) be informed about the present situation. Analyze them in the light of the Word of God and human solidarity and from the point of view of the poor and those who are victimized."

Look for creative ways

The group also urged members of the religious to "search for creative ways to assert, defend and promote our rights to assemble and to speak up and to freely take our responsibilities as citizens."

One way to do this was to put up a "data gathering center" at the AMRSP secretariat to "facilitate acquisition, transmission and sharing of reliable information on the situation."

"We will accept contributions from members and from our mission partners with credible and direct sources of information," it said.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RP making 'substantial progress' in war vs TB

From page A1

STBP's 10-year mission to halve TB prevalence and deaths worldwide by 2015, called the 2nd Global Plan to Stop TB, during ceremonies to mark the 6th World TB Day at the Philippine International Convention Center yesterday.

Control program

The drop in TB cases among Filipinos was mainly attributed to the "DOTS" strategy, a mode of treatment adopted in 1996 by the Department of Health's National TB Control Program. DOTS stands for Directly Observed Treatment Short Course.

"Case detection and DOTS coverage (of detected cases) has improved and this makes the Philippines one of the most successful national TB control programs in the world. [It] has made quite a substantial progress in the last few years," Roscigno said.

"And we are here today for the launch of the global plan because the Philippine program is a success that needs to be sustained," said Roscigno, who also chairs the STBP working group on new diagnostics.

Roscigno, who has devoted the last 25 years working on TB eradication, is also the chief executive officer of FIND (Foundation for Innovative New Diagnostics), a non-profit, public-private partnership focusing on poverty-related diseases.

Dr. Thelma Tupasi, who chairs the STBP's working group on drug-resistant tuberculosis, said the DOTS was being extended to only 2 percent of known TB cases nationwide when it was introduced locally in 1996. By 2002, its coverage had reached 100 percent under the National TB Control Program, he said.

From 1996 to 2005, the DOH provided patients with P139 million worth of TB drugs, according to program manager Dr. Rosalind Vianzon.

Prior to DOTS, which is a six-month regimen, the established treatment for TB lasted one-and-a-half years, Tupasi explained.

Each year around the world, 9 million people develop TB while 2 million die of it, Roscigno said.

The 2nd Global Plan to Stop TB (2006-2015) is in line with the United Nation's Millennium Development Goals. The first plan was implemented from 2001 to 2005.

Its main targets include saving the lives of 14 million TB sufferers and treating 50 million of them by 2015; introducing new, age-specific drugs by 2010; and developing a new, affordable vaccine by 2015.

The plan requires some $56 billion, but Roscigno said governments were already allotting a total of $25 billion for their respective anti-TB programs, thus leaving a $31-billion "gap" for the donor community to fill.

Health Secretary Francisco Duque III, who launched the government's counterpart campaign to the Global Plan at the Quezon Memorial Circle yesterday, said TB remains "among our top killers."

While TB has largely been kept at bay in the developed world, it continues to kill 75 Filipinos everyday, or more than 27,000 people yearly.

Half of all TB cases worldwide come from the Philippines and five other countries in Asia, according to Duque.

Despite a rigorous effort to contain the disease through the national TB program, Duque said many poor people, among them women and children, continue to be victimized by the disease.

10% are children

He noted that about 10 percent of those who die from the disease every day were children.

But he said the Philippines has taken great strides in the global effort in containing the disease.

Among 22 countries with the highest rates of the disease, the Philippines was the only one to surpass the 70-percent target rate for case detection by 2 percent.

But the country's cure rate still stands at 81 percent, against the target rate of 85 percent.

Duque yesterday signed a memorandum of understanding with other stakeholders in the national campaign against tuberculosis to "accelerate the development of new anti-TB drugs and diagnostics in the country."

Signatories include the Department of Science and Technology, Global Alliance for TB Drug Development, Foundation for Innovative New Diagnostics and the Philippine Coalition Against Tuberculosis.

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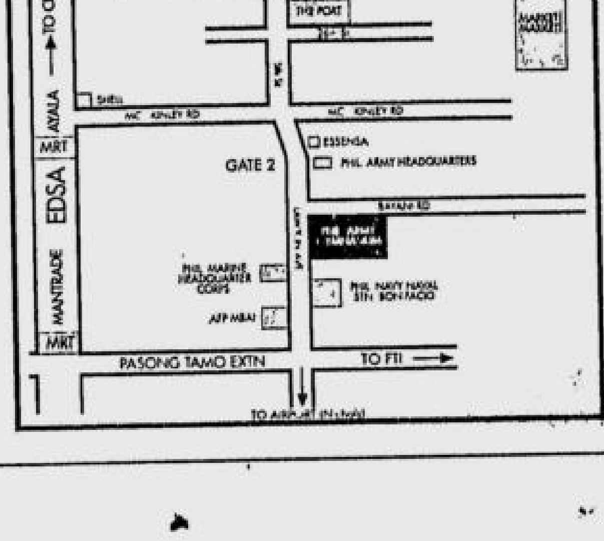

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Saturday, March 25, 2006
Annunciation of the Lord

1st Reading: Is 7:10-14
2nd Reading: Heb 10:4-10
Gospel: Luke 1:26-38

In the sixth month, the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a town of Galilee called Nazareth. He was sent to a young virgin who was betrothed to a man named Joseph, of the family of David; and the virgin's name was Mary.

The angel came to her and said, "Rejoice, full of grace, the Lord is with you." Mary was troubled at these words, wondering what this greeting could mean.

But the angel said, "Do not fear, Mary, for God has looked kindly on you. You shall conceive and bear a son and you shall call him Jesus." He will be great and shall rightly be called Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the kingdom of David, his ancestor; he will rule over the people of Jacob forever and his reign shall have no end."

Then Mary said to the angel, "How can this be if I am a virgin?" And the angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore, the holy child to be born shall be called Son of God. Even your relative Elizabeth is expecting a son in her old age, although she was unable to have a child, and she is now in her sixth month. With God nothing is impossible."

Then Mary said, "I am the handmaid of the Lord, let it be done to me as you have said." And the angel left her.

Commentary

In the midst of Lent we remember the reality of the Incarnation the coming of the Word of God to humankind and to Mary. Our God is made flesh; our God is Word made flesh dwelling among us. As we walk the way of the cross, all the way to death and resurrection's glory, we walk with God, human with us. We follow our human merciful God in Jesus. As Mary conceived the Word in her womb by the power of the Holy Spirit when the Most High overshadowed her, so we read daily the Word of God so that the Most High might overshadow us and bring forth God in our flesh by the power of the Spirit. Then during the Paschal mystery we too will die and rise with the Word made flesh among us. We must remember.

SUPREME COURT DOCTRINES

REMEDIAL LAW (CIVIL PROCEDURE)—Consolidation of actions—Consolidation of actions is expressly authorized under Section 1, Rule 31 of the 1997 Rules of Civil Procedure. A court may order several actions pending before it to be tried together where they arise from the same act, event or transaction, involve the same or like issues, and depend largely or substantially on the same evidence, provided that the court has jurisdiction over the cases to be consolidated and that a joint trial will not give one party an undue advantage or prejudice the substantial rights of any of the parties. The obvious purpose of the rule allowing consolidation is to avoid multiplicity of suits to guard against oppression or abuse, to prevent delays, to clear congested dockets, to simplify the work of the trial court; in short the attainment of justice with the least expense and vexation to the parties litigants. Consolidation of actions is addressed to the sound discretion of the court and its action in consolidating will not be disturbed in the absence of manifest abuse of discretion. Consolidation should be denied when prejudice would result to any of the parties or would cause complications, delay, cut off, or restrict the rights of a party. (Citations omitted.) (Justice Austria-Martinez, Second Division, Teston v. Development Bank of the Philippines, G. R. No. 144374, November 11, 2005)

At it again, Gonzalez lashes out at Subic rape victim's ma

By Armand N. Nocum

JUSTICE SECRETARY RAUL GONzalez is at it again, hitting out with his trademark impolitic remarks against women.

After the mother of the Subic rape complainant cried her heart out on television over reports that the Department of Justice was planning to drop the rape case against three of the four accused United States Marines, Gonzalez remarked: "Is she aspiring to be a movie star?"

"I'm never influenced by the emotional outburst of people who don't know the law," Gonzalez said in reaction to the mother's televised plea to him, asking the justice secretary whether he did not also have a mother and daughter to act so coldly against her 22-year-old daughter.

Gonzalez yesterday denied reports that a DOJ panel tasked to review the Subic case had recommended the dropping of the case against three of the accused – Marine Ssgt. Chad Carpentier and Lance Corporals Keith Silkwood and Dominic Duplantis.

He said he was still evaluating the report and would make the final recommendation next week.

He said he was planning to "downgrade" the rape case against the three from "principal" to "accessory" or "accomplice."

But he said Lance Cpl. Daniel Smith would remain as the principal accused in the case.

GONZALEZ

"What I'm studying is not to drop but to find out what's the extent of the participation [of the three soldiers] which would make them indictable," he said.

Gonzalez said it was hard to prove that the three conspired with Smith to rape the woman.

"Under our law you have to prove conspiracy ... beyond reasonable doubt. Conspiracy is not presumed, you must establish conspiracy as establishing the crime itself which must be proven beyond reasonable doubt," he explained.

The justice secretary said this was something the mother of the alleged rape victim should understand.

"If you downgrade because that's what the evidence says, whether she's the grandmother of the grandmother I don't care. I speak on the basis of the evidence. She should understand that conspiracy must be proven like the crime itself," he said.

He said the Supreme Court has ruled that mere presence at a crime scene does not constitute conspiracy.

"You have to consider the way these people [Carpentier, Silkwood and Duplantis] acted during the rape itself. They don't know what conspiracy is and yet they go on yakking and yakking," he said.

Gonzalez has come under attack from women's groups for telling former President Cory Aquino to first mind her daughter, Kris, after Aquino called for President Macapagal-Arroyo's resignation. Aquino's controversial youngest daughter is known for her romantic misalliances.

He also caused an outcry for stating that he would not order the arrest of actress Susan Roces, the widow of the late presidential candidate Fernando Poe Jr., for her verbal attack on the Arroyo administration, saying she was "too beautiful" to be jailed.

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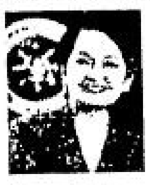


MALACAÑAN PALACE
MANILA

MESSAGE

Greetings to the administration, faculty and students of the Philippine Rehabilitation Institute Foundation, Inc. (PRIFI) College of Sciences on the occasion of your Blessing and Inauguration.

The war on poverty cannot be won unless anchored on the education and enlightenment of our citizenry. Winning this battle would mean empowering our people by giving them free rein to develop fully their God-given talents for their own and our nation's benefit. It would also require providing them with opportunities with which to improve themselves through knowledge and skills. And PRIFI has done this through the course offerings it is known for-- physical therapy, occupational therapy and nursing. For this, I commend you well.

May we continue to strive in broadening our education, stressing science, math and English, to sharpen our intellectual and technological competitive edge. May this event strengthen our faith in our youth as tomorrow's leaders.

Mabuhay kayong lahat!

Gloria Arroyo
GLORIA MACAPAGAL ARROYO
President, Republic of the Philippines

Republic of the Philippines
House of Representatives
Quezon City, Metro Manila

MESSAGE

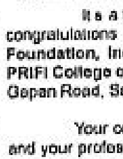
My warmest felicitations to the Philippine Rehabilitation Institute Foundation, Inc. (PRIFI) College of Science as it inaugurates its Guagua Campus on March 25, 2006.

I commend the PRIFI, its officials, and staff for their continuing endeavor to advance education in the fields of nursing, occupational and physical therapy. Its commitment to academic progress in the countryside is truly admirable and worthy emulation.

Please carry on your good work and Mabuhay kayong lahat!

Maraming salamat po!

MIKEY MACAPAGAL ARROYO
Congressman, Second District, Pampanga



Republic of the Philippines
House of Representatives
Quezon City, Metro Manila

MESSAGE

It's a true honor and privilege to convey my warmest congratulations to the Philippine Rehabilitation Institute Foundation, Inc. for the Blessing and Inauguration of the PRIFI College of Sciences on 25 March 2006, along Olongapo-Gapan Road, San Matias, Guagua, Pampanga.

Your commitment to the progress of medical education and your profession helps transform the lives of so many of our fellow men. You and I are kin in leadership, practice and quality service. In doing our respective jobs, we have to do it well because our work affects deeply the lives of people.

Like you, I have been striving for excellence in fighting and working for the good of the Filipino people especially the poor and the average family for they form the backbone of our beloved nation.

In thanking God for our own good fortune, each of us must render in return some sacrifice of our life for another life.

Mabuhay! Dacal Pung Salamat!

FRANCIS 'BLUEBOY' L. NEPOMUCENO
Congressman, First District, Pampanga

PRI
College of Sciences, Quezon City

The Chairman and Members of the Board of Trustees of the Philippine Rehabilitation Institute Foundation, Inc.

announce the Blessing and Inauguration of the

PRI College of Sciences, Guagua Campus
(Olongapo-Gapan Road, San Matias, Guagua, Pampanga)

on March 25, 2006 (Saturday)
at 2:00 PM

Blessing is officiated by
His Excellency, Most Rev. Paciano B. Aniceto, D.D.
Archbishop of San Fernando

Republic of the Philippines
Province of Pampanga
MUNICIPALITY OF GUAGUA

MESSAGE

In behalf of our Municipal Government, I extend my warmest felicitation to the Board of Trustees and Officers of the Philippine Rehabilitation Institute Foundation, Inc.

We are grateful and proud to give home to an excellent institution, ranked among the best in our country. The presence of PRIFI in Guagua affords our young people a vital opportunity to avail of competent tertiary courses, particularly in the field of human sciences. Thus, your school serves as catalyst towards achieving our vision of a higher quality of life for the people of Guagua.

Again, CONGRATULATIONS and MABUHAY!

RICARDO S. RIVERA
Municipal Mayor

PRI
College of Sciences
Philippine Rehabilitation Institute Foundation, Inc.

MESSAGE of the CHAIRMAN

As the Institute's existence dawns into its 11th year, let me take this opportunity to express my unending commitment to see the Philippine Rehabilitation Institute Foundation, Inc. College of Sciences grow even more dynamically as an educational and training institution. This is even more possible as I point out the determination and loyalty of the Institute's men and women towards the ultimate achievement of the Institution's goal and ideals.

As the Philippines Rehabilitation Institute excitedly begins the year as it embarks on its expansion project - the PRI College of Sciences, Guagua Campus in the province of Pampanga - allow me to express the noble objectives of this humbling project. Firstly, it is meant to decentralize the availabity of quality education, which is usually concentrated in the urban centers like Metro Manila and offer its students in the provinces. And secondly, this is to maintain the unity of the family, as prospective college students do not need to go to Metro Manila to avail the much-desired tertiory level of education. There are more collateral things that may be obvious such as - the significant decrease in expenses on the part of the family and the students, the job opportunities of people who will work in the new establishment who otherwise need to go to more urbanized centers, and the opening up of more economic activities in the area. Finally the new project is a challenge to PRI as it propagates its mission-vision for young and dynamic people to always keep the path of righteousness and dignity whatever one becomes and wherever one is.

To all the members of the faculty, teaching and non-teaching staff let me remind you to maintain heightened professionalism and honesty of work in our country. The road is winding and steep but it is only way to the mountaintop. At the end of the day, there will always be an inner sense of peace and good pride in whatever we do especially in the service for others. This is our profession - a medical allied healthcare provider, a school administrator, a teacher, or a doctor - it is a noble service - oriented profession.

I have always been extremely pleased and honored to gear the Philippine Rehabilitation Institute play a significant role in the formation and education of young people as I hope and pray that will someday make the world a whole lot better. And as I have always been reminding everyone - remain steadfast in the noble commitment to serve our fellowmen!

Mabuhay ang PILIPINAS! Mabuhay kayong lahat!

RICARDO N. LIM, M.D.
Chairman of the Board of Trustees, PRIFI

Palace: To kill GMA at PMA real threat

From page A1

rebel soldiers to kill the President and key Cabinet members either during the PMA alumni homecoming or during the graduation ceremonies.

Ms Arroyo did not attend the alumni homecoming last Feb. 18.

"There's no specific threat, but we're not taking any chances. We have to remain vigilant," Kison told reporters.

Ms Arroyo will award medals and diplomas to each of the 324 graduating cadets from the PMA Mandala Class of 2006. The entire military top brass and top government officials are expected to attend today's event.

Enough forces

"We have enough forces to secure the PMA graduation, the President, her Cabinet secretaries, and all the VIPs," Northern Luzon Command chief Lt. Gen. Romeo Tolentino said.

"We went on red alert because there might be a spillover. What's the use of attacking the PMA when you can't get Metro Manila? We cannot take that risk," said National Capital Region Command spokesperson Capt. Ramon Zagala.

He said if no untoward incident happened on Saturday, NCRCom chief Lt. Gen. Alan Cabalquinto would recommend to higher headquarters the downgrading of the red alert.

Threats accepted

Presidential Chief of Staff Michael Defensor said yesterday he did not want to unduly alarm the public but the alleged plot to assassinate Ms Arroyo, possibly at PMA, was genuine.

Defensor said the alleged plot had been turning up in various intelligence reports, whether from the police, the military or the Presidential Security Group, since one to two months ago.

The President, he said, had already been briefed about this and had "accepted this kind of threat."

The latest report Defensor got, although unofficial, was just last week.

"The present information that we have is from the rightist threat," he said. He said the authorities did not know exactly who among those in the Right was going to carry out the threat.

Beyond normal

"But the threat is there," he added.

"The intensity of the threat or the level of the threat, we can say this is beyond normal," he also said.

But he said that Ms Arroyo was not about to stay put in Malacañang.

Asked whether Ms Arroyo's security would be doubled, Defensor said what was being done was more of "heightening efforts" to gather intelligence reports.

"With assassinations, it takes intelligence more than putting guards," he said.

PMA Superintendent Brig. Gen. Leopoldo Maligalig played down reports of a possible bomb threat at Fort Del Pilar.

"There's no specific threat but we're taking all precautions. We hope nothing untoward happens but we don't know how desperate they [rebel soldiers] are," Maligalig said.

Officials in charge of security definitely do not want any repetition of the bomb explosion on March 18, 1987 that occurred at the PMA a few days before then President Corazon Aquino was to visit the Academy.

1,000 troops

During the graduation rehearsals, a bomb exploded at the roof of the PMA grandstand above the podium where Ms Aquino was supposed to deliver a speech.

Four people were killed and 47 others were wounded in the explosion which Aquino said was meant for her. The graduation rites pushed through under heavy security.

"We're preparing for a bomb attack similar to the one in 1987," said an official privy to the security preparations.

About 1,000 troops including those from the Army's Special Forces Regiment and highly trained counterterrorist unit Light Reaction Company have been deployed to secure the PMA compound in Baguio City.

No Scout Ranger

No troops from the Army's elite fighting unit First Scout Rangers Regiment, whose commander, Brig. Gen. Danilo Lim, and a number of officers were implicated in the Feb. 24 plot, were deployed to secure the President's visit to PMA this year.

The route of Ms Arroyo's convoy leading to the grandstand will be entirely cleared of vehicles while protesters would be blocked before they could reach Baguio City.

To limit opportunities for any attacks, "the President's stay [inside the PMA] will be very brief," said the official.

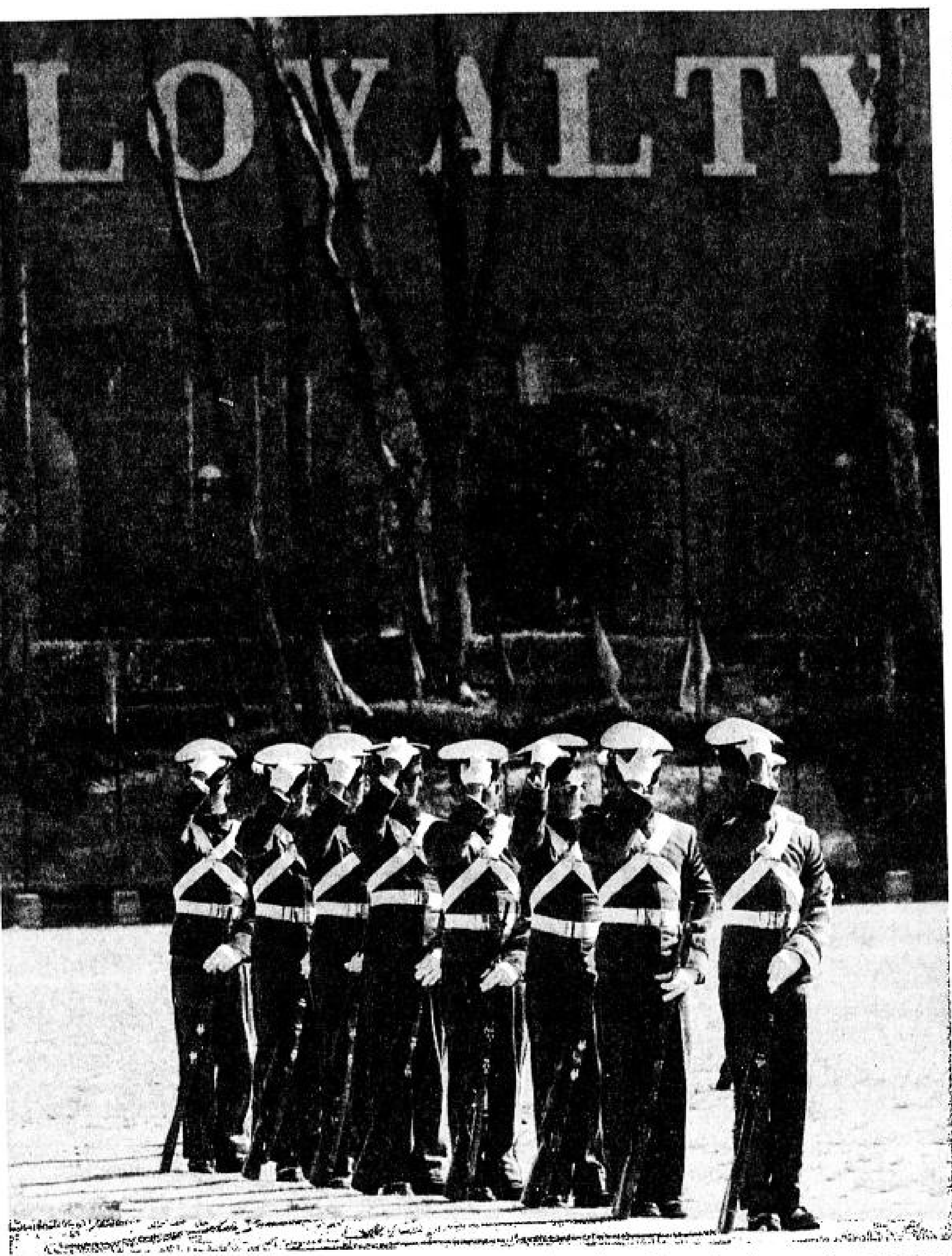
A couple of choppers would be put on standby for emergency evacuation.

The police placed Metro Manila on heightened alert effective Friday night.

PNP ready

"It's because of GMA's visit to Baguio for the graduation," said Director Vidal Querol, chief of the National Capital Region Police Office.

"What is important is that we are ready," he said. *With a report from Luige A. del Puerto*



LOYALTY backdrop says it all for graduating cadets today who go into a formation for a performance for their loved ones and other guests on Friday. President Arroyo is the guest of honor and speaker at the graduating rites today. LYN RILLON

NO. 4 IN CLASS 2006, Cadet Ethelbert Aaron M. Kiunisala receives the Aguinaldo saber from Emiliana A. Suntay, the great granddaughter of Gen. Emilio Aguinaldo, for whom the award is named. TOOTS SOBERANO/NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU

SILENT DRILL: Cadets belonging to the Mandala Class of 2006 who are graduating today in Fort del Pilar, Baguio City, during a dance number as part of their silent drill performance for their parents, officers and other guests. A total of 324 cadets graduate today. LYN RILLON

Three sets of brothers among 324 graduates

From page A1

and Cesar Cañazares were born in 1983.

Michael Gotong said the PMA made sure the siblings within the academy do not fraternize as much as possible.

"PMA does not allow even those with the same surnames to stay in one company," he said. "They cannot even stay in one room in the barracks."

But Michael said the brothers see each other regularly and they sometimes study together.

In the book "Closer Than Brothers: Manhood at the Philippine Military Academy," Alfred W. McCoy wrote there were only at least 26 pairs of blood brothers who ended up as classmates between 1940 to 1999.

Probably the oldest are Manuel and Melchor Acosta who both graduated in 1940.

Record of brotherhood

Among the brothers who threw their shakos (feathered cap) together at Borromeo Field were: Johnny and Ruperto Andaya (1963); Eric and Raul Vinoya (1987); Josefino and Manuel Cataluña (1977); Jaime and Cesar Gopilan (1971); Ray and Ronaldo Roderos (1975); Wendell and Harry Ares (1988); Martin and Moises Boquiren (1967); Domingo and Romerico Carbonell (1980); Arnel and Arturo Carolino (1977); Clifford Richard and William George (1994); Angelito and Nicolas Coronel (1983); Cleo and Victor Erfe (1969); Christopher and Ramon Estella (1984); Elmer and Roland Estilles (1984); Pedro and Felix Gonzales (1942); Emilio and Benjamin Hulipas (1985); Edgardo and Raul Leyritana (1972); Marvin and Maurito Licudine (1989); Renato and Zosimo Paredes (1971); Ignatius and Robert Patrimonio (1991); Oscar and Leonardo Rabena (1978); Leopoldo and Prudencio Regis (1951); Daniel and Nelito Tan (1991); Jessie and Wenceslao Tapawan (1986); and Allen and Teody Toribio (1990).

Sibling rivalry

There are many reasons brothers join the PMA and sibling rivalry is first and foremost.

In the Gotongs' case, it was the younger Joseph Orland who entered the PMA first. Michael was then studying chemical engineering at Saint Louis University here.

"I negotiated with my mother about my wish to join the PMA," Michael related.

He said they and the Sotero brothers tried to help each other since three of them studied together at the Benguet State University high school in La Trinidad.

Not that Michael needed coaching academically. He was, after all, the only PMA cadet to ever score perfect points in physics.

Thermodynamics

"It was two weeks since the start of class when I realized I had not made a mistake in thermodynamics, so it became a challenge for me to perfect it," Michael said.

Thermodynamics is a branch of physics dealing with temperature, pressure and volume that PMA offers in the fourth year. Michael never made a mistake in his recitations and quizzes in that class.

Like the elder Sotero, Michael will graduate magna cum laude.

Aside from the three pairs of brothers, seven other members of the graduating Mandala Class have fathers who are PMA alumni.

Among them is Cadet First Class Ernest Carolina, whose father, Ernesto (Class 1970), is a former defense undersecretary.

High court rules lying basis for annulment of marriage

From page A1

Yup, according to a recent ruling of the Supreme Court, lying to your spouse can be grounds to declare your marriage null and void.

The high court has annulled the marriage of Leonilo Antonio and Marie Ivonne Reyes for being founded on "fantasy."

"Indeed, a person unable to distinguish between fantasy and reality would similarly be unable to comprehend the legal nature of the marital bond, much less its psychic meaning, and the corresponding obligations attached to the marriage, including parenting," the court said in a decision penned by Associate Justice Dante O. Tinga on March 10.

The ruling, in effect, upheld a 1995 decision by the lower court declaring the couple's marriage "null and void."

The suit for annulment on the basis of psychological incapacity was first filed by Antonio in 1993, three years into his marriage with Reyes, who is 10 years his senior.

Antonio was granted an annulment by the Regional Trial Court. Reyes questioned the decision, elevated the case to the Court of Appeals, which ruled in her favor.

Antonio, in turn, appealed to the Supreme Court, which overturned the CA's decision, declaring the couple's marriage as "null and void."

Antonio and Reyes first met when he was 26 and she was 36. A year later, they got married before a minister of the Gospel at the Manila City Hall. Subsequently, they had a church wedding at the Sta. Rosa de Lima Parish, Bagong Ilog, Pasig City, on Dec. 6, 1990.

Persistent lying

In his complaint, Antonio claimed Reyes persistently lied about herself, the people around her, her occupation, income and educational attainment.

He said his wife had concealed the fact that she previously gave birth to an illegitimate son, and introduced the boy to Antonio as the adopted child of her family. Reyes told the truth about the boy's parentage when Antonio learned about it from other sources and after their marriage.

Antonio said his wife also claimed that a brother-in-law, Edwin David, attempted to rape and kill her when in fact, no such incident occurred.

He also accused his wife of misrepresenting herself as a psychiatrist to her obstetrician, Dr. Consuelo Gardiner. He said Reyes even told some of her friends that she graduated with a degree in psychology.

Antonio said his wife also claimed to be a singer or a free-lance voice talent affiliated with Blackgold Recording Company (Blackgold). She invented friends named Babes Santos and Via Marquez, who sent long letters to Antonio, saying that Reyes was their "No. 1 moneymaker" and was worth about P2 million.

Lovers lie

But during one of their quarrels, Reyes was forced to admit to Antonio that she had written the letters herself.

To support Antonio's petition, Dr. Dante Herrera Abcede, a psychiatrist, and Dr. Arnulfo V. Lopez, a clinical psychologist, said that based on their tests, Reyes was essentially a normal, introspective, shy and conservative person. On the other hand, her persistent and constant lying to Antonio was abnormal or pathological and undermined their relationship.

"Statistics never lie, but lovers often do, quipped a sage. This sad truth has unsettled many a love transformed into matrimony. Any sort of deception between spouses, no matter the gravity, is always disquieting. Deceit to the depth and breadth unveiled in the following pages, dark and irrational as in the modern noir tale, dims any trace of certitude on the guilty spouse's capability to fulfill the marital obligations even more," the high court said in its ruling.

COA confirms Marcos money …

From page A1

"special audit" on the use of the Marcos funds for the Department of Agriculture's Ginintuang Masaganang Ani (GMA) program showed overpricing in at least four regions—Ilocos, Western Visayas, Northern Mindanao and Davao.

The P100 million is part of the P544 million in Marcos funds that the administration released weeks before the May 2004 elections to buy seeds and fertilizer for the GMA hybrid rice program.

It came from the P35-billion Marcos Swiss banks deposits that were recovered in late 2003.

The COA also discovered that no public bidding was conducted, and that the majority of the purchases was made through "direct contracting" although the fertilizer could be "obtained from many sources," he said.

"The COA report showed the grossly overpriced purchase of fertilizer in at least four regions [by an] average of 700 percent," Drilon said in a statement.

"The DA, through [its] regional field units (RFUs) and [local government units], paid P48 million for fertilizer worth only P6 million, or an overprice of P42 million," he said.

The P100 million was distributed to 13 regions, but the Audit Observation Memorandum prepared by DA supervising auditor Flerida Jimenez on Feb. 23 showed overpricing in at least five regions.

The fertilizer purchases—whether made by RFUs (in the Ilocos and Davao), LGUs (in Western Visayas and Northern Mindanao), or nongovernmental organizations (in Central Visayas and Northern Mindanao) were overpriced by a total of P42,431,400, the COA report said.

"[They] purchased fertilizers from exclusive distributors when substitute products are available in the market at lesser prices," it said, adding:

"A previous canvass of similar items from the same suppliers disclosed an excess cost of P42,431,400."

Padded costs

In the Ilocos, the fertilizer was overpriced by P4.005 million. (The purchase price was P4.5 million, but a canvass by the COA showed that it should have been only P495,000, the report said.)

In Davao, the overprice reached P2.55 million. (Purchase price: P3 million; market price, according to COA canvass: only P450,000.)

The overprice in the Western Visayas amounted to P2.760 million. (Purchase price: P3 million; market price, according to COA canvass: P240,000).

In Northern Mindanao, the fertilizer was overpriced by P7.253 million. (Purchase price: P9 million; market price, according to COA canvass: P1,746,500.)

The COA also reported that three NGOs purchased fertilizer that was overpriced by a total of P25.59 million. (Total purchase price: P28.851 million; market price, according to COA canvass: P3,256,850).

In Northern Mindanao, the "validity of the delivery and distribution of fertilizer could not be established" because of insufficient information, like the address of farmer-beneficiaries, the report said.

The list provided contains only the names and the quantity of the fertilizer received, it said.

Delayed distribution

The report also said the Davao-RFU's distribution of foliar fertilizer worth P3 million was not effectively monitored, "resulting in the delayed distribution of 1,501 bottles for about 10 to 16 months, while 2,249 bottles remained undistributed."

"The delayed distribution and the failure to distribute the remaining bottles of fertilizers deprived the farmers of benefits in time for the cropping season. The undistributed bottles may be susceptible to loss or damage if not immediately disposed of," the report said.

It also said only 14.35 percent of the recipients of foliar fertilizer were agrarian reform beneficiaries (ARBs).

The law requires that ARBs should comprise 80 percent of the recipients in agrarian reform programs funded by recovered Marcos funds.

"Since the source of the funds emanated from the Agrarian Reform Fund, it is understood that the intended recipients are [ARBs]," the report said.

It noted, however, that the DA-Office of the Secretary "made no mention of specific activities to be undertaken utilizing" the funds in its memoranda of agreement with the RFUs for the fund transfers.

"As a result of the failure of the DA-Osec to specifically mention the intended uses of the release, funds were treated as regular release[s] for the implementation of the banner program of the department, which is the GMA program," the COA report said.

It added that "almost all the funds were used to purchase fertilizers and other farm implements including shredders."

No clear basis

Another Audit Observation Memorandum prepared by the DA supervising auditor on Jan. 30 said there was "no clear basis for the distribution of the funds by region and by municipality."

"Although the memoranda of agreements made no mention of the fund to be transferred to LGUs, the DA-RFUs downloaded [the money] to the LGUs within their regions…" the report said.

The report also said that of the P100 million, the RFUs had liquidated only P90,703,829.25.

It said that the unliquidated amount stood at P8 million, and that around P1.2 million had not been released to the Caraga Autonomous Region.

There were added "deficiencies," based on Feb. 23 Audit Observation Memorandum.

DA-Region IV paid P3 million for five fabricated shredders and other machines through direct contracting and without patents as required by law, the COA report said.

But two of the shredder chippers were overpriced by about P452,625. The other units were a shredder, a hammerhill/shifter and a pelletizer, which were "donated by the Robison Homes Association Inc." in Antipolo City, the report said.

It said one of the shredder chippers was found in the farm of Rep. Victor Sumulong in Antipolo. It was overpriced by P303,680 (purchase price: P750,000; market price, according to COA canvass; P226,320).

Request, purchase same date

The report also said the five machines were not included in the list of equipment provided in the GMA rice program as certified by its national coordinator, Frisco Malabanan.

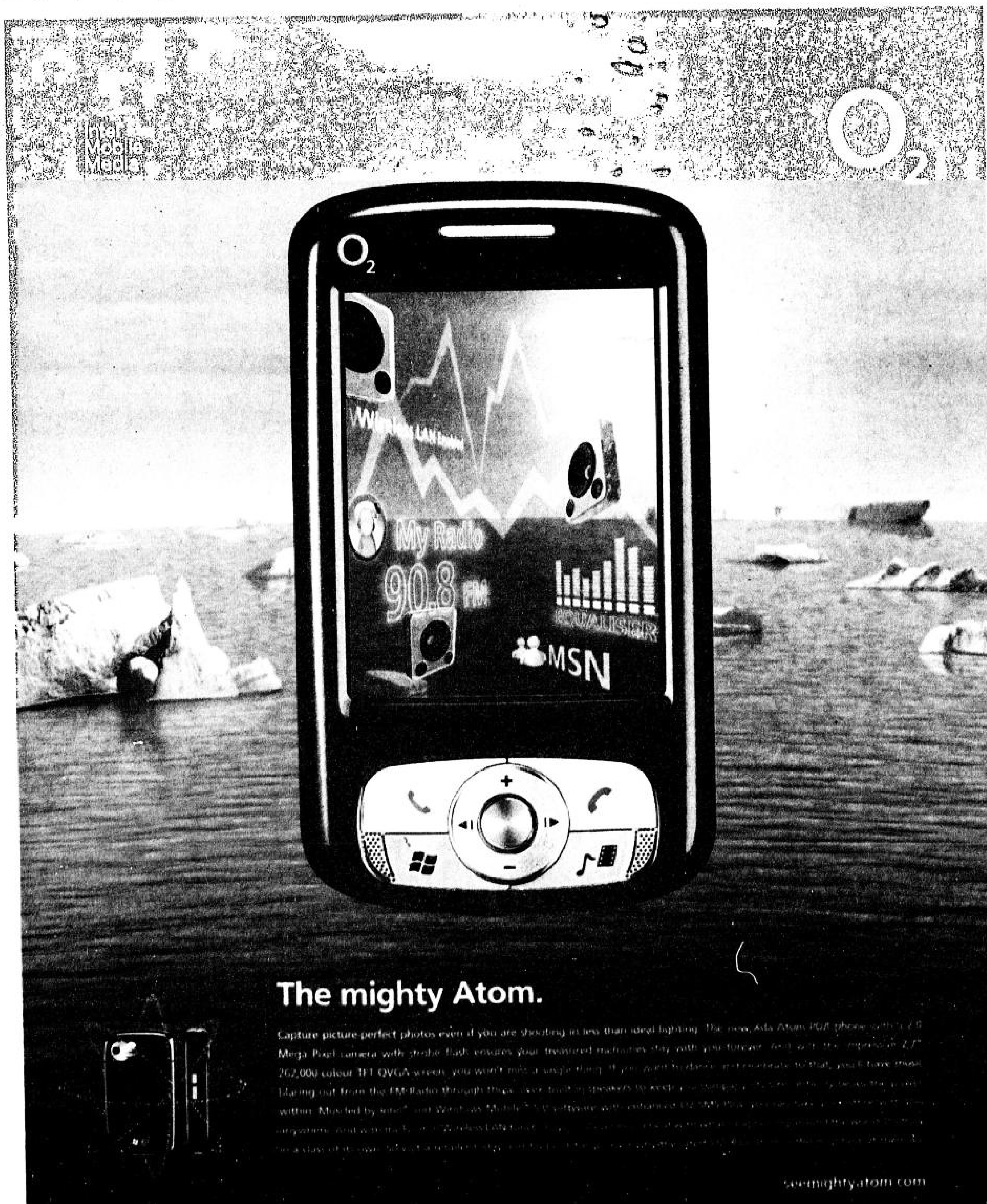
It noted that the resolution of the Bids and Awards Committee, the purchase request and the purchase order bore the same date of May 5, 2004.

It said this was "irregular" because a purchase request was usually made before the BAC resolution and the purchase order.

The COA report also noted that the Municipal Agriculture Fishery Council chair of Libertad, Antique, charged farmers P100 per gallon of liquid fertilizer, "contrary to the intention of the program."

"Farm inputs and implements, as provided in the guidelines, should be given free to beneficiaries," it said.

The report recommended further investigation of the farm inputs purchases, "to determine the persons liable in the purchase of fertilizer and farm implements on the level of the RFUs, LGUs and NGOs and file legal action if warranted," and of "the excess costs" of the shredders and other implements.



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OPINION

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Their pound of pork

EDITORIAL

WITH ALMOST A QUARTER OF THE YEAR already gone, the House of Representatives finally approved on second reading last Thursday the national government budget for 2006. House leaders lost no time in giving themselves a pat on the back, with Speaker Jose de Venecia proudly declaring that, notwithstanding their differences, the members of the House "of all colors and stripes summoned the political will and courage" to pass the budget.

We don't know whether to laugh or cry over De Venecia's attempt to solicit public approbation for what they have done. The kindest thing that can be said about the House vote is that it is an improvement on last year's failure to pass the 2005 budget measure. When Congress failed to enact the appropriations measure, it abdicated one of its key responsibilities which is to determine how much the national government will spend and on what. It's called the power of the purse, which the members of Congress are quick to assert for their convenience but which they have surrendered to the executive branch. They surrendered it last year when they did not work on the budget measure, and they surrendered it again this time by adopting wholesale the spending bill proposed by President Macapagal-Arroyo.

What makes the surrender even more galling is that they are not even ashamed to admit it. Albay Rep. Joey Salceda, chair of the committee on appropriations, said the trillion-peso budget was approved by the House "as is, where is, as President Arroyo submitted, [down] to the last comma, except for grammatical slips." And it took them all of seven months to do the editing? And at a cost of how many hundred millions or billions of pesos? If lapses in grammar—not in judgment—are now the only lookout of congressmen when it comes to the budget, why don't they just send the bill to the English department of any reputable university or a newspaper office? They can do a much better job and at an infinitely much lower cost.

But surely Salceda exaggerates. What Ms Arroyo has proposed is a spending bill that tops the trillion-peso mark for the first time in history at P1.05 trillion. And unless there has been a mass conversion to clean living in the House, congressmen are not likely to deliver all that money to Malacañang neatly wrapped without exacting their pound of pork.

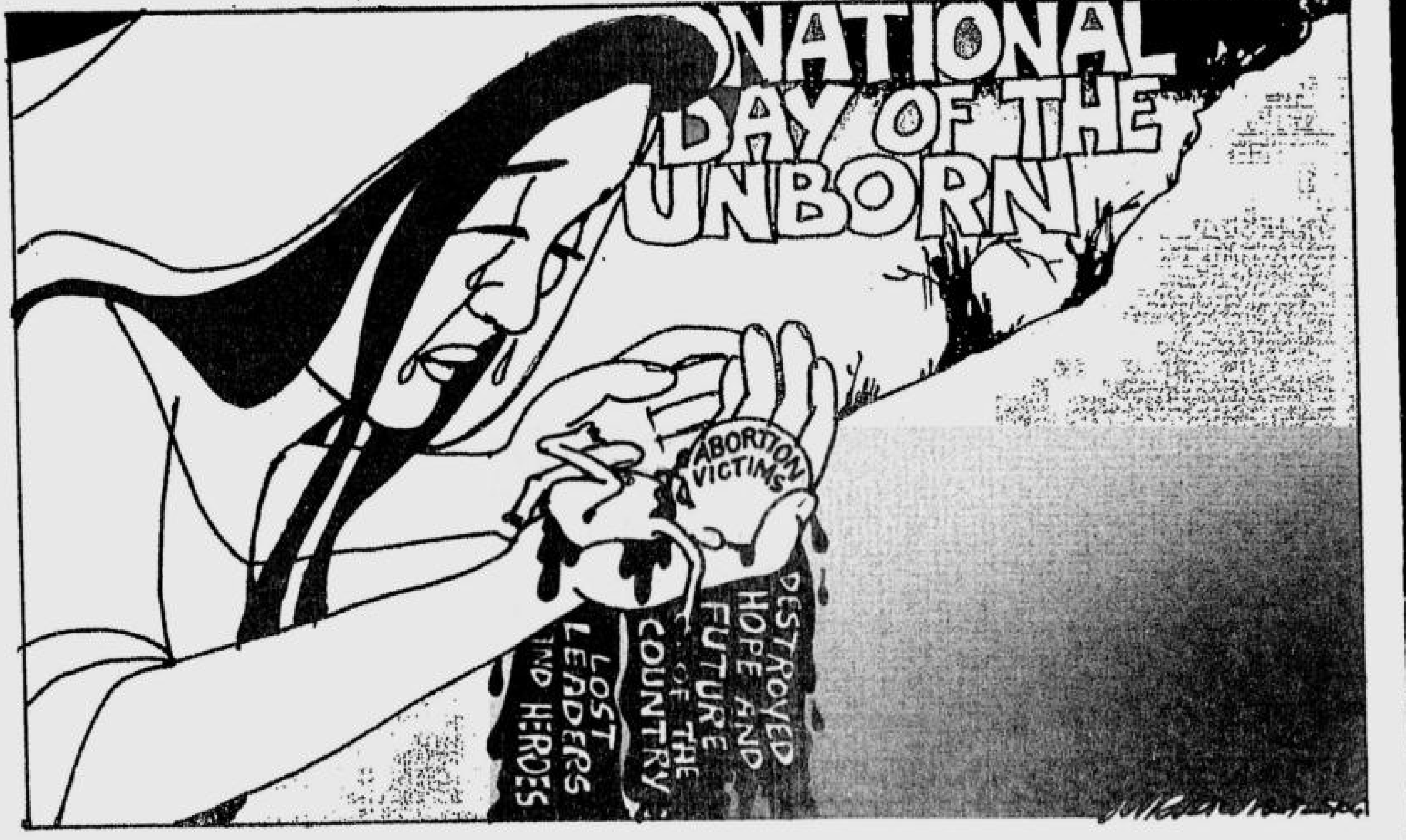
Which was exactly what the House did. Majority Floor Leader Prospero Nograles said each congressman will now get P70 million as his priority development assistance fund, instead of the P40 million he received last year. That will raise the pork barrel allocation for House members alone from last year's P9.4 billion to P16.5 billion this year.

It's a hefty price for giving Malacañang all it wants, but then it's the taxpayers who are paying. And the lawmakers believe they are entitled to it, after passing several revenue measures last year. "The executive branch will have billions in additional revenue due to EVAT and other new tax measures," Nograles noted. "What will they do with all that money?"

There were 2.8 million Filipinos looking for jobs in January but who couldn't find employment. Almost one out of every five Filipinos complained that they had gone hungry at least once during the last quarter of last year, according to a Social Weather Stations survey. There are hundreds of thousands of young boys and girls who have either left school or who attend classes without books to read. The government is P3.89 trillion in debt—the main reason the Arroyo administration asked Congress to pass new tax measures. And the lawmaker whose main task is to rally the House majority behind the administration's legislative agenda asks what the government will do with the money?

There are a million and one other problems that require money to solve, but Nograles cannot see them. There are many ways to put taxpayers' money to productive use, and he cannot find them. But how can he when, like most if not all of his colleagues in the House, all he looks for are the slabs of pork in the budget that he can take to his district?

The government has hardly begun collecting the new taxes, and already congressmen are dividing a substantial part of government income among themselves. But Malacañang doesn't mind because it is getting the lion's share.


NATIONAL DAY OF THE UNBORN
ABORTION VICTIMS
DESTROYED HOPE AND FUTURE OF THE COUNTRY
LOST LEADERS AND HEROES

Decisions, decisions

SEPARATE OPINION

Isagani A. Cruz

WITH ALL DUE RESPECT TO THE SUPREME Court, I venture the suggestion that it follow the rule of first things first in the decision of the cases now presumably clogging its dockets. I refer particularly to the petitions against President Macapagal-Arroyo's Executive Order No. 464 and Proclamation No. 1017 which have been hanging fire for quite a while now and causing the nation much anxiety and agitation.

The challenge to EO No. 464 was filed as early as last October but it is still undecided now despite the adverse effect of the provocative edict on the investigations being conducted by Congress on several claimed anomalies in the executive department. Among these are the questionable contract with the Venable law firm and the disposition of the P728-million fertilizer fund allegedly for GMA's election campaign.

The Senate held National Security Adviser Norberto Gonzales in contempt for his refusal to identify the persons, suspected as aliens, who had paid the retainer consisting of millions of pesos to the American lawyers who had agreed, among other odd undertakings, to work for financial aid from the US Congress for the revision of the Philippine Constitution. His detention was lifted when he was hospitalized for a supposed delicate heart condition, but he was soon back in the Cabinet attacking the Senate in the safety of EO No. 454. The Senate has not officially reacted and is apparently reluctant to exercise its contempt powers again pending the decision of the Supreme Court on the controversial order.

Undersecretary Jocelyn Bolante was summoned by the Senate for questioning about the release of the fertilizer fund, but he also sought sanctuary in EO No. 464 and has so far succeeded in avoiding the legislative inquiry. He is now somewhere in the United States where he is reportedly attending to Rotary business in preference to his official duties in our own government. Incidentally, is he receiving official pay, and travel allowances as well, while he is supposed to be a fugitive from the Senate in his private asylum abroad?

Presidential Proclamation No. 1017 was issued on Feb. 25 and was immediately challenged before the Supreme Court as a de facto imposition of martial law without the strict safeguards embodied in Art. VII, Sec. 18 of the Constitution. The President withdrew the proclamation a week later, saying that the "cabal" against her had been suppressed but at the same time threatened to impose the ukase again in her discretion. In oral arguments heard last March 4, the government submitted that the issue had become moot and academic while the petitioners asked for a categorical judgment on the constitutionality of the protested measure.

I imagine that considering the length of the debate that lasted into the night, the members of the highest tribunal have been sufficiently enlightened about the merits of the case and should now be able to arrive at an informed decision. But it seems they are still deliberating on whether to anoint or annoy GMA. The latest report is that the parties have not yet submitted their required memoranda and that they have asked for the usual extensions of time to do so. If the last pleadings are finally filed, the justices will have no less than 24 months to come to a decision as required (or permitted) by the Constitution.

The same observations are made regarding the petitions against EO No. 464, on which oral arguments were heard only on Feb. 21, when the parties were also required to submit the usual memoranda and were given the extensions they requested to repeat their earlier already belabored arguments. The two-year constitutional deadline will also give the justices sufficient time to exercise their juristic gifts to resolve the challenge to the right, if any, of the President of the Philippines to limit the power of legislative investigation. But I hope they will not use up all that period and make up their minds only in 2008.

I believe the Supreme Court, and all lower courts that follow its example, can prevent the needless delay in their administration of justice by—as the least of the necessary remedies—refusing to grant motions for more time to submit the required pleadings and to declare the laggards in default for their failure to do so. The reason why lawyers move indolently on their cases is the leniency of the courts, including and especially the Supreme Court, in granting such motions, often automatically. That is why cases stagnate—nay, deteriorate and putrefy—to the prejudice of substantive and procedural due justice that, ironically, is the justification given for such inexcusable procrastination.

The Supreme Court has tarried long enough in deciding the constitutional challenge to President Arroyo's Executive Order No. 464 and Proclamation No. 1017. The people are still waiting for its long-pending verdict and for the justices to stand up and be counted.

Why people are not out on the streets

GET REAL

Solita Collas-Monsod

FOR THE OPPOSITION MEMBERS WHO crow over the latest Pulse Asia survey—which shows 65 percent of Filipinos think that ousting President Macapagal-Arroyo is the best thing that can happen to the country—take note: the same survey reveals that 81 percent of Filipinos think that ousting GMA is the worst thing that can happen to us.

How is this? Does this imply that Filipinos can't make up their mind or/and that the survey can't be relied upon?

As mentioned in last week's column, the survey respondents were asked which of 10 political scenarios, presented to them in a list, constituted the most beneficial—the one that would best serve the national interest. Multiple answers were not allowed.

Five of the scenarios had to do with GMA's resignation and various possible aftermaths: (1) special presidential election; (2) VP De Castro taking over; (3) the VP resigning and the Senate president taking over until the holding of special elections; (4) a temporary group or "junta" taking over to prepare for elections to choose a new president or prime minister; and (5) the VP taking over temporarily while preparing for a new government under a new Constitution.

Two of the scenarios had to do with coups after which: (6) the military and the police forces decide which group of politicians govern; and (7) the military and the police themselves directly wield political power.

One scenario had (8) a foreign government getting involved and installing in power its Filipino allies.

The last two scenarios had to do with the Arroyo administration staying in power (9) until it completes its mandate under the Constitution; and (10) until the Constitution is changed and a parliamentary government takes over before 2010.

The 65-percent figure (representing those who believe that GMA's ouster is the best scenario) was obtained by adding up the respondents who chose any one of the first eight scenarios—resignation, coup, foreign intervention. (Although the inclusion of foreign intervention as an oust-GMA scenario is puzzling—isn't it possible that big brother might want to keep GMA?)

Next, the respondents were presented with the same 10-scenario set, but this time they were asked to choose the scenario they considered the worst, that is, the most inimical to the national interest. The percentage of respondents who chose one of the same first eight scenarios added up to 81 percent. And this explains our seemingly paradoxical findings—that 65 percent of Filipinos think ousting GMA is the best thing that can happen to the Philippines, while a greater majority (81 percent) think that ousting GMA is the worst thing that can happen to the country.

Does this mean that the survey results are not to be relied on? The answer is "No." There is nothing wrong with Pulse Asia's survey methodology—questions were pre-tested, it used a multi-stage probability sample with a 3-percent margin of error either way on the national level at the 95 percent confidence level, i.e. if 40 percent of the respondents think that coups are the worst possible scenarios, that means that 95 percent of the time, the true percentage of respondents would lie between 37 percent and 43 percent.

If there is any beef on my part, it would be that (a) lumping together the results of the various ouster scenarios implies a homogeneity to the responses that is not there—which is why one is confronted with seemingly paradoxical results; and that (b) if Pulse Asia made the observation that 65 percent of Filipinos thought that the eight ouster scenarios were the best, it should have also pointed out that 81 percent of Filipinos thought that these eight ouster scenarios were the worst.

Does this mean that Filipinos are fickle? Again, the answer is "No." It merely shows that one man's meat can be another man's poison. Fifty-nine percent of Filipinos may want her to resign, but they are divided as to the second part of the proposition—on the post-GMA scenarios. One who thinks that resignation followed by special elections is ideal, may also think that resignation followed by a junta is the pits. Or, one who thinks that Ms Arroyo should resign may have a violent objection to her ouster by coup.

Which is what the survey results show: 59 percent of Filipinos think any of the five resignation scenarios is best, 4 percent think the two coup scenarios are best, and 2 percent think that foreign intervention is best—for a total of 65 percent. On the other hand, 29 percent of Filipinos think resignation is worst, 40 percent think coups are worst, and 12 percent think that foreign intervention is worst—for a total of 81 percent. See why adding up the various scenarios can be counterproductive?

The survey results also provide an explanation to the question of Amando Doronila: If 65 percent of Filipinos want GMA out, why aren't they out on the streets? Because, first, they are hopelessly divided on what the post-GMA scenario should be (the average response for each scenario was less than 8 percent, with a high of 16 percent and a low of 1 percent, plus or minus the margin of error), and they may not want to go out unless the resignation aftermath is their favored scenario. The second reason is that romancing the military as part of an ouster attempt is the kiss of death for popular support—while 19 percent of Filipinos think that Ms Arroyo's continuing in office is the pits, more than double (40 percent) think that military coups carry that distinction.

Yet, leaders of the oust-Gloria movement make no secret of their courting the military, and they are upset that people aren't rallying around them. Hellooo!

Formidable adversaries

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

FORMER PRESIDENT ESTRADA, AS EXPECTED, was in a denial mode when he testified during his trial for plunder at the Sandiganbayan. But he is up against two formidable personalities.

One is Chavit Singson. Recall that when he angrily spilled the beans on Estrada in October 2000, his delivery was very spontaneous. One dark night in Pasay City, Singson's car was blocked by goons who, he believed, had been sent to assassinate him. He then publicly accused Estrada of a litany of sins, among them his alleged links to *jueteng* and pocketing millions in "commission" from a provincial project. The people believed Singson not only because of his spontaneity but also because he was Estrada's bosom pal.

* * *

Now comes Sen. Panfilo Lacson, Estrada's handpicked PNP chief, affirming the former president's links to *jueteng*. Lacson disclosed on TV that Estrada once admitted to him that the money for the Muslim Youth Foundation came from jueteng. In the days when Estrada was shopping around for a PNP chief, Lacson, then his anti-crime czar, was quoted in news reports as saying that if he didn't get that post, Estrada would be the first president to be jailed. The other day, Lacson disclosed that he refused to testify at Estrada's trial because he felt he knew too much. His TV statement seems to jibe with that news story.

* * *

The move to amend the Charter has indeed acquired a life of its own, now that local government officials are pushing for a "people's initiative." Will it be irreversible? I believe that some critics would try to stop it by all means, with the Supreme Court as their last resort. But there's no doubt that things are moving dynamically at the grassroots, thanks to the stubborn refusal of the senators to engage in an intelligent discussion on the merits of the parliamentary/unicameral set-up. The senators could end up isolated on this issue and looking very paranoid about their survival.

* * *

Senate President Franklin Drilon's chief of staff, Antonio Gallardo, wrote to "correct" an item here, which stated that 12 municipal mayors and six provincial board members of Iloilo, his home province, attended the Liberal Party gathering in Manila Hotel last March 2. Gallardo said that the truth is that 11 of them were Lakas members and not a single LP board member was there. He claimed that LP mayors from northern Iloilo—including Concepcion Mayor Raul Banias, who "refused to be used as 'prop' in the farce"—walked out in protest against the oath-taking of the officers led by Manila Mayor Lito Atienza.

Denials and counter-denials have been made in the media about that LP gathering in Manila, but it's rather strange that Drilon's faction had to gather in Cavite, not Club Filipino, to reassert itself. Was it because Drilon's faction couldn't get enough people to come? Then, too, Atienza challenged Drilon to attend a nationwide gathering of LP party members to find out whom the rank and file really wants as president. Drilon's answer was that he'd accept the challenge provided President Macapagal-Arroyo also submits to a snap election. Drilon seems to be fudging; it's hard to see the relation between the two issues.

* * *

The complaint of my sister-in-law, interior designer Sonia Santiago-Olivares, about the terrible state of the ladies' room in the Iloilo City airport was picked up by the media there. It turned out that there have been previous complaints about it, notably from former Tourism Secretary Narzalina Lim. And I myself have personally seen the deterioration of restrooms in service stations all around Luzon (interestingly, it's the independent oil companies, not the Big Three players, that have more tolerable facilities). Now that many people will be traveling as domestic tourists this summer, I would urge Tourism Secretary Ace Durano to get a commitment from the oil companies to improve their restrooms. The drive to have clean restrooms should begin with the holding of seminars on how to clean them. In China, the tourism ministry stiffly fines restaurants and shops caught with dirty restrooms and occasionally exiles them to the Gobi desert. We should do likewise here.

* * *

A felicitous occasion in Iloilo was the adoption last month of Fr. Pierre Tritz, the saintly 91-year-old French-born priest who has dedicated decades to serving Filipino street children, as an "honorary son of Iloilo City." Fr. Tritz founded Erda Foundation, which funds the schooling of children from very poor families. Erda currently supports 32,700 poor students: 6,531 in 258 pre-school classes, 17,740 in regular elementary classes and 1,191 in high school. Among them are 4,000 students in Iloilo City, where Erda has a tie-up with 18 educational institutions and NGOs, led by the University of Iloilo and University of San Agustin, the Knights of Columbus of Molo, and Mother Butler Foundation. Mayor Jerry Trenas' executive order adopting Fr. Tritz recognized the priest's "noble dream" of making the less fortunate children "mentally, socially, emotionally and spiritually healthy" and Erda's contributions to Iloilo City in the past 20 years.

The adoption ceremony in Iloilo City was attended by many of Erda's poor scholars. Fr. Tritz later recalled to this columnist his joy when the students rushed to embrace him. "I was really moved to witness the happiness of those kids responding so well to Erda's efforts to give them a chance to get educated." The priest believes that the only way to break the vicious cycle of poverty that has trapped many Filipino families is to provide training and education to its young members. Help Fr, Tritz pursue that goal. Call him at 732-4327 and 743-0382, or e-mail PierreTTritz@vasia.com

Garci and other fakes

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

TOURISTS FROM THE PHILIPPINES HAVE BEEN warned about bringing anything "fake" with them when they travel outside the country. The warnings are particularly directed at women who love shopping at any of our bargain meccas, where fake signature items abound, including handbags, scarves and, of course, DVDs.

The moment customs agents in foreign countries spot these fakes, we're told, not only will they confiscate the items; anyone in possession of them will be brought in for questioning.

We might protest that we did nothing more heinous than succumb to sales pitches for imitations of genuine signature items that might otherwise cost several days' meals for our families. But the law is quite clear on this: mere possession presumes complicity with the pirates and profiteers. At the very least, the buyer is presumed to have known that what he or she has bought or possesses is not the real thing.

Former Comelec Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano is thus out of line when he protests that he should not be held accountable for the passport he presented to Congress, which was declared to be a fake—and not a very good fake at that—by the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, which does security printing for the Department of Foreign Affairs.

* * *

"GARCI" presented the passport to prove his contention that he had been in the Philippines the whole time the controversy over his taped conversations with, among others, President Macapagal-Arroyo, was rocking the country. Legislators had maintained that the former elections commissioner had been spirited out of the country to avoid being questioned about the tapped phone conversations as well as his role in the alleged "rigging" of poll results. The Singaporean government had also presented proof that Garcillano had entered the country in the time that he was missing.

When he finally surfaced to supposedly "tell all" about his role in the controversy, Garcillano blithely explained away his absence by declaring that he had just lain low and was in hiding because he feared for his life. This, even if, he averred that he had not talked at all with the President about "massaging" the results of the 2004 elections.

* * *

OF COURSE, the authenticity or lack thereof of the passport he had volunteered as "evidence" is only a side-issue to the main matter under investigation, which is the result of the elections, now under a cloud of doubt. But the fake passport is already a sign that deception was involved, not just to skew the poll results but also to cover-up the entire operation, including to mislead Congress about Garci's whereabouts.

Is the fake passport a "strong indication (of) a conspiracy or cover-up," as Rep. Gilbert Remulla contends? Or was it just a means employed to keep Congress off Garci's back?

This man has done enough damage to the common welfare. Note that the alleged coup attempt that has led to our current crisis has been traced to restiveness within the military over the generals and high-ranking officers implicated in the Garci tapes. Only until Garci himself finally tells the whole truth will our nation rest easy.

* * *

HERE'S the continuation of the list of the women members of the Guinsaugon Women's Health Organization and of Abanse! Pinay, all of whom are believed to have perished in the landslide that buried their village over a month ago:

Teresita Madaje, Fedela Bautista, Teresita Arbiol, Nenita Siega, Victorica Coquilla, Analyn Coquila, Nilia Alvero, Gena Delute, Expeditha Celmar, Villanita Celmar, Nancy Punio, Manuela Garcia, Perlita Esclavosa, Mercedes Sumile, Lourdes Ichon, Letecia Auditor, Dolores Boniza, Viola Sibunga, Merlie Binondo, Madel Casera.

Concordia Jarman, Cristituta White, Lucena Gramatico, Victoria Punio, Victoria Navos, Concepcion Mesa, Letecia Arbiol, Josephine Punio, Monena Caalem, Rotchel Caslib, Dina Cañon, Josephine Beltran, Diolita Egido, Casiana Lanic, Arceli Magallanes, Francisca Libaton, Anaclita Aure, Brenda Bolasco, Jonabel Credo, Nenen Navos, Marlyn Libaton, Eva Reño-Terante, Marilyn Arcenas, Tarsicia Libaton and Marissa Ybañez.

Here's a listing of other women who were declared missing, or were listed as survivors by the DILG but are actually still missing:

Bernadith Garcia, Rufina Basco, Eridina Mercide, Servella Mondano, Asia Bolasco, Leonora Peligro, Ana Punio, Aurelia Vanzuela, Alecia Miravalles, Josima Batas, Sylveria Ybañez, Perlina Garcia, Lilia Garcia, Demetria Fuentes, Ledina Toyhacao, Marisa Siega, Roquel Bulagsac, Maylinda Garcia, Marites Bandibas, Leah Equeto.

Anabel Garcia, Dina Bandibas, Elsa Pagodon, Melinda Maca, Editha Zamora, Elisa Naparuta, Gema Bulagsac, Elizabeth Gorme, Josephine Sabandal, Maria Greta Velasco, Gloria Navos, Cristina Sansol, Loreta Marquida, Elen Siega, Dina Celmar, Elnoria Pilo, Sulficia Auditor, Julieta Gramatico, Pretcel Mendoza, Analyn Dimawala.

Marlina Canillo, Cecilia Gramatico, Junky Arbiol, Benadith Bulagsac, Julita Duhiling, Serbelia Mundano, Marilinsy Camarenta, Marely Pilo, Morberta Dagasdas, Janeth Pagal, Charly, Cuarez, Glorina Alonzo, Arlene Velasco, Ludivina Salvacion, Salina Sibay, Amelita Navos, Sara Siega, Ocencia Medilo, Emeliana Timkang, Vivian Relos.

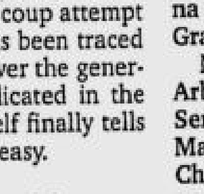
Sharon Bolasco, Gerlie Ybañez, Arlene Ybañez, Janice Inso, Aireen Terante, Cristina Terante, Violeta Libutan, Analiza Magtupa, Jocelyn Dizon, Alicia Miravalles, Alicia Terante, Rowena Redoloza and Ma. Grace Burdas.

Thanks to Laureen Daclang Dumaguing of the Abanse! Pinay Southern Leyte chapter for the names of the women and for all her efforts to alleviate the suffering of the survivors, especially the children orphaned in the disaster. More on them in future columns.

Latin America's leftist mirage

WORLD VIEW

Julio María Sanguinetti



EVER SINCE DENG XIAOPING'S REMARK THAT "it's not the color of the cat that matters, but whether it catches mice," it has been clear that the old Cold War divisions of Left and Right, communism and democracy, are obsolete. Indeed, the China that Deng began to build in 1978 is now communist politically and capitalist economically. But the tendency to apply old labels remains strong, so that every day we hear gross simplifications like the current one that holds that Latin America is now undergoing a powerful leftist wave.

The basis for this idea is that the rise to power of Lula da Silva in Brazil, Hugo Chávez in Venezuela, Néstor Kirchner in Argentina, Tabaré Vásquez in Uruguay, and, most recently, Evo Morales in Bolivia and Michelle Bachelet in Chile shows a socialist trend. But are all of them old-style leftists? Or do they practice old-style populism? Just what is happening in Latin America?

To start, we can rule out Chile from the supposed leftist surge, for it is a country ruled by a centrist coalition of Ricardo Lagos' European-style socialists and the country's historic Christian democrats. The fact that Bachelet comes from socialist roots does not change the nature of her government, which will follow the parameters of its predecessors, and will preside over the most open economy in the region, one integrated into the global market by free-trade agreements that extend from the United States to China.

Neither can one argue that Brazil's government under Lula has not been characterized by moderation, following a more orthodox economic policy even than that of its predecessor, one based on fiscal discipline, budget surpluses, and an anti-inflationary monetary policy. In contrast to old leftist slogans against repaying foreign debt, Lula's government has hurried to settle all of its International Monetary Fund obligations in advance.

The rallying call against paying foreign debt, which was ubiquitous in Latin America in the 1980s, was buried when the Argentinean government did the same thing, committing one-third of its reserves to pay in advance its debts to the IMF. Even Nobel laureate Joseph Stiglitz has questioned whether these countries' debt payment measures represent an exaggerated concession to neo-liberal orthodoxy.

Uruguay's government, too, has not deviated from the basic tenets of the policies of the conservative government that preceded it. It maintains the country's improved relations with the IMF, and it has even approved an agreement with the United States to guarantee investments.

Even Bolivia's government should not be regarded as a reincarnation of the continent's old populism. Evo Morales' rise to power was inspired by historic discrimination against the indigenous majority, with the coca leaf as an emblem of an ancestral grudge.

Although Morales campaigned on a promise to nationalize mineral resources, this has not happened yet, and, indeed, he now seems to be leaning toward partnerships with big state-owned energy companies, in the manner of Venezuela's Pedevesa or Brazil's Petrobras. Morales might yet turn more radical, but, for now, he represents a deep, ethnically inspired demand for historic justice, not a hard-Left ideology.

None of these governments openly speaks of socialism, much less Marxism. There is no planned collectivist economy, foreign investment is still sought, and, in general, the rules of liberal democracy still apply. Leaders may still think that "another world is possible," but, while they use anti-globalization rhetoric, they pursue serious economic policies, even if more out of resignation than conviction.

What all this means is that Latin America is not shifting Left, but settling in the center. Even traditionally leftist parties like Brazil's Partido dos Trabalhadores or Uruguay's Frente Amplio have abandoned old Marxist ideals. Naturally, they declare friendship with Fidel Castro and seek his embrace to prevent old comrades from accusing them of betraying their legacy. But they go no further: Castro is fine for photo opportunities, but not for policy advice.

Venezuela's Chávez is another story. No doubt, his regime revels in all the historic forms of populism: messianic leadership, anti-American rhetoric, disregard for constitutional forms, drunken spending, and state-orchestrated popular mobilization to fill squares and jeer at supposed enemies. Chávez is riding a wave of high oil prices and is determined, with torrential verbosity, to exercise some sort of continental demagogic leadership. But, while Chávez-style populism appears to have made some headway in Peru, it is far from succeeding.

In Colombia, everything indicates that Álvaro Uribe, erroneously labeled a rightist because of his fight against his country's guerrillas, will be re-elected. Oscar Arias is winning in Costa Rica. In Mexico, the presidency is up for grabs.

In the meantime, Latin America's economies will continue to benefit from the world boom in commodity markets, elections will remain normal and life will go on in the political middle of the road.

Project Syndicate

Julio María Sanguinetti is a former president of Uruguay.

Weeping for the living

YOUNG BLOOD

Ala Paredes

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—Ed.

IN THE ATENEO ART GALLERY, THERE IS ONE PAINTING that I will never forget. It is entitled "Children Begging For Food" by Kathe Kollwitz. It's a simple work, very rough and done only in charcoal. It shows three very small, hungry children, arms extended and holding empty bowls, much like that famous scene in the movie "Oliver Twist" where the title character says, "Please sir, I want some more."

What's most striking about the painting is the expression on the children's faces. It reminds me of fish that die out of the water with wide, unseeing eyes and parched, parted lips. The soul-lessness in their faces is frightening, a feeling that was heightened when I read that the artist was influenced by what she had seen in poverty-stricken neighborhoods and concentration camps during World War II.

I remembered the painting when I heard the stories being told by ABS-CBN insiders about the "Wowowee" stampede in the PhilSports Arena last Feb. 4. The accounts I heard were enough to make anyone weep—but more for the living than for the dead.

I was told that near the entrance to the PhilSports Arena, as many as five dead bodies were already stacked one on top of the other, but some people still clambered over them in an attempt to get in. And even as the police were carrying the bodies away, some people were still asking if they could please have the dead's tickets. It was also said that when relatives of some of the victims got money, they immediately divided it among themselves.

I don't know what it's like to be so poor that one would fight tooth and nail for the opportunity to win a few thousand pesos. But are our people really so desperate that they can't think beyond what they're going to eat for the day? Have we really sunk so low?

But low is a relative term, and these people live much different lives from mine. How do I know I wouldn't do the same thing if I were in their place? I've never had to struggle to keep body and soul together. I don't know what acts I am capable of committing until I experience what it's like to starve. One never knows the depths of depravity one can sink into until he has to fight for survival.

So how can we go any higher if our people have nothing in their stomachs? How can we strive for a higher culture if we can't even satisfy basic needs? We are so poor in many ways— materially, culturally, morally.

I have the same confession to make as many people I know: I shun the poor out in the street, often unconsciously. When I pass by them, I find myself trying not to look them in the eye. When they come up to me and beg for money, I wish they would go away.

Why? Because such encounters bring me face to face with the same, old, tormenting dilemma: Should I give this guy money or not? Wouldn't giving him money only make him dependent on others and make the problem worse? But then again, doesn't he need this money more than I do? It's a battle between mind and conscience. And as I struggle to make a decision, the beggar becomes more insistent, making me slightly nervous.

Sometimes conscience wins out and I give him change, but maybe it's really just to shut him up. Sometimes my brain wins and I politely tell him to go away. Either way, I end up with a heavy, uncomfortable feeling that I can't quite place. But since I'm in a hurry, I just brush the bad feeling aside. It's not your problem anyway, says my brain.

Want to know what that feeling is? It's guilt and anger. It's the same collective guilt that privileged people in this country share, the ones who have shelter, food to eat, a promising future and money to spare for new clothes, nights-out and vacations. The guilt is always there telling you: "You're well-off, and they're not. You went to a good school, and they will never be able to afford it. You're living in this house, using the Internet on your fancy computer, while outside, your neighbor worries what her kids are going to eat today and the next few days." It's the kind of guilt that reminds us always that we could have been born in their place.

We're angry with ourselves for allowing this to continue day after day, mainly because we feel so powerless and because we don't know what we can do to change things. We're angry with ourselves because we know we use apathy to shield ourselves from the distress we'd otherwise experience from seeing these people suffer.

I wish I could propose some grand solution to this problem, but I don't have one. I'm no hero. Just like everyone else, I wish I didn't feel so damn helpless.

Sure, we can complain about our President, or join NGOs and charities that cater to the needy. But we know that this isn't all about the President, and it isn't just about how much food and money we can give away. This is about poverty that seems to have penetrated the material aspect and entered our souls. This is about all of us.

After the "Wowowee" incident, we find ourselves searching for answers, trying to see what we have become as a people more clearly. We are all outraged, shocked, disappointed, trying to make sense of the tragedy. No matter how angry you may be, and whether you find answers or not, please do not commit the single biggest sin you can make against our country, which is losing hope.

If you are angry, be glad you are still capable of feeling anger unlike the many who are too jaded and hopeless to feel anything.

Ala Paredes, 22, is an AB Communications graduate of the Ateneo de Manila University.

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THEY SAID

Armed march

"If they were not preparing for violence and bloodshed, what were they bringing their weapons for—to direct traffic?"

—Rep. Prospero Pichay reacting to reports that military officers were planning to bring their weapons in their march to Edsa

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Are the consumers of Meralco double-billed for transmission?

MERALCO'S ANNOUNCEMENT that its generation charge has gone down by 8.23 centavos per kWh (PDI, 3/14/06) needs further scrutiny.

For some reason—unexplained up to now and obviously tolerated by the Energy Regulatory Commission (ERC)—Meralco continues to "bundle" generation and transmission charges, thus distorting the true cost of generation.

In its announcement, Meralco, through Elpi Cuna, said the cost of power sourced from the National Power Corp. (Napocor) is higher by 21 centavos per kWh. He did not say what Napocor's cost is, net of the so-called transmission-related charges. Neither did he say what Meralco-IPP charge is, net of transmission-related charges, although he went as far as to say that the Meralco-IPP transmission cost is lower than Napocor's by 4.73 centavos per kWh.

If the Meralco statement is true, then the National Transmission Co. must be charging Napocor and Meralco-IPP differently; this is discriminatory pricing, made even more abhorrent because it gives rise to a situation where one government entity discriminates against another government entity, to the disadvantage of the public.

Under the Electric Power Industry Reform Act, generation and transmission charges are supposed to be unbundled. Since we already paid 77.16 centavos per kWh for transmission charges (as shown in our Meralco bill), are we being double-billed for transmission?

This is an issue long brought to the attention of the ERC by other consumer groups, but it remains unresolved up to now.

Finally, on the matter of Napocor and Meralco-IPP pricing, in ERC Case Nos. 2001-646 and 2001-900 (decided on March 20, 2003), Meralco-IPPs were allowed to charge an average of P4.21 per kWh while Napocor was charging only P2.46 per kWh, or a difference of P1.75 per kWh. Meralco's average generation rate for its captive customers was set by the ERC at P3.40 per kWh. At that time, Napocor could supply Meralco's requirements, as Napocor was in fact contractually obligated to supply those requirements.

How do we recover that Meralco-IPP windfall?

For that, we have filed a plunder case at the Ombudsman against some officers of Napocor, Meralco and Meralco-IPPs (OMB-C-A-05-0568-L, OMB-C-C-05-0660-L) to find out who should be answerable to the captive customers of Meralco.

—BERT DELA LLANA,
anticorruptntwork@hotmail.com

Cause of anarchic traffic in Pasay still operating

THIS IS A REJOINDER TO THE letter of Annabelle Ramirez (PDI, 2/9/06) questioning the use of that portion of the service road—from Araneta Avenue near Heritage Hotel to Russel Street, Pasay City—as a public terminal for jeepneys and buses. I regularly go to Baclaran to buy ready-made clothes for my business in the Visayas so I can easily empathize with Ramirez's concern and sentiment.

This terminal not only robs Pasay City of its gains from its beautification project. If I may add, it also has made traffic in that area a nightmare, especially on Wednesdays and after 5 p.m. The Edsa-service road intersection beside Heritage Hotel has become a traffic bottleneck that even the "Brown boys" of Pasay City and MMDA traffic aides can no longer do anything about it.

Precious motorists' time and money are simply wasted. Meanwhile the city government of Pasay City fattens its coffers with the parking fees charged for the use of the terminal. This anarchic traffic does not speak well of the city government of Pasay City.

From the parking fees, can't Pasay City build somewhere else a more decent public terminal to provide commuters with real convenience as well as to spare the motorists the nightmare they regularly must go through while the terminal operates in that stretch?

One doesn't have to be a regular visitor of Baclaran to notice this obnoxious and resentful situation, and I hope the concerned officials of Pasay City will be conscientious enough to do something about it.

—VIOLY MAPALAD,
vmapalad@yahoo.com.ph

The Philippine President's power in times of war

IN CONNECTION WITH THE COLumn "Proclamation No. 1017" of former Justice Isagani A. Cruz (PDI, 3/4/06), may I quote the explanation he made in his book "Philippine Political Law" (2002 edition), regarding the "military power" of the President:

"The 'power of the sword' makes the President the most important figure in the country in times of war or other similar emergency. In theory, he plans all campaigns, establishes all sieges and blockades, directs all marches, fights all battles. His leadership, if bold and decisive, can galvanize the people to gallantry or, if vacillating and timorous, can enable them to defeatism and surrender. It is because the sword must be wielded with courage and resolution that the President is given vast powers in the making of military decisions.

"Accordingly, it has been held that he can determine what degree of force a particular crisis demands, as when President Lincoln declared a blockade of the Confederate ports during the American civil war; organize courts martial for the discipline of the members of the armed forces violating military law; create military commissions for the punishment of war criminals; and call out the armed forces to prevent or suppress lawless violence, invasion, or rebellion." (Cruz, "Philippine Political Law," 2002 Ed., pp. 219-220)

—DAVID C. NAVAL,
305-A PNB Bldg.,
City of Naga

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Tell it to the Marines

THIS TIME "TELL IT TO THE Marines" has become more than just an idiom.

Col. Ariel Querubin might be one of the Armed Forces of the Philippines' most respected soldiers. However, if all Filipino soldiers who are tasked to defend me were like him, I would rather have a big stone tied around my neck and then have myself thrown into the sea.

You see, his protest against the relief of Brig. Gen. Renato Miranda showed the true colors of the military adventurers. Despite their supposedly messianic delusions, they have allowed themselves to serve as the puppets of certain individuals lusting to wrest power from the duly constituted government.

Why didn't Querubin protest and call for people power when a certain general was bypassed in the selection of SouthCom chief? Was it because it didn't concern his sponsors? But when it came to the allegedly unjust relief of his "father"—more like a "godfather" to me—he unhesitatingly griped and sobbed on the streets like a baby deprived of his toy.

The relief of Miranda was, I believe, an ordinary occurrence in the AFP, just like in any organization, brought about by the necessity of service. Why the people, or those who have nothing more important to do than disrupt everybody's life, took it as a revolution escapes my simple mind.

It is crystal clear that Querubin, and those surrounding him, wanted trouble. When the newly installed Marine commandant wanted to talk to him to thresh things out, those people prevented the dialogue, thus, making the whole situation more tense than it already was. It was not the presence of soldiers in battle gear, much less the presence of tanks, but rather the presence of Argee Guevarra et al. that turned the situation into a standoff. The simple problem could have been solved right away, but those people, with interests known only to God and their accomplices, prevented it.

And the most ironic thing about the whole episode was that Cory Aquino tried to go there, ready to die for the man who once almost toppled her administration.

When Querubin called on people power to protect him, he might have told it to the Marines. As for me and the soldiers who died in 1989, his and his benefactors' intentions were as clear as daylight.

—EUGENE DAVID R. TANCINCO,
pcga801@yahoo.com

Reusable cloth bags now

AS CONSUMER ADVOCATES throughout the world marked World Consumer Rights Day last March 15, we of the Ecological Waste Coalition appealed to Filipino consumers to pay attention to our "toxic" practices, particularly in using plastic bags.

Plastic bags have become a menace to modern societies. In malls, restaurants, bakeries, *turo-turo* and *sari-sari* stores, plastic bags are freely given away, unmindful of their impact on people's health and on the environment.

Unintended or not, plastics litter our surroundings. They get caught in fences, trees and even in electric posts, obstruct creeks and rivers, suffocate the earth, trap birds, drift into the seas and oceans, choke and kill marine animals. Plastics can last for hundreds of years because they are non-biodegradable.

In the production, use and disposal of most plastics, harmful substances are released into the atmosphere. Assorted chemicals and additives are applied to make plastics; in the process, hazardous wastes are generated. When plastics are burned in dumps or incinerators, toxic pollutants are discharged into the environment, including heavy metals and dioxins.

As consumers, we have a role to play in curbing the use of plastics and in preventing the "plasticization" of our lifestyles and environment.

For starters, we can refuse to use check-out plastic bags and bring our *bayong* or reusable carry bags when we shop. Smart retailers and vendors should follow suit by giving discounts to buyers who bring their own bags or offering earth-friendly customers with reusable cloth bags that they can proudly use again and again.

As consumers, we have the right to demand a healthy and sustainable environment. At the same time, we have the responsibility to be conscious of the social and environmental impacts of our consumption choices, and to use our power in the market to clean up and protect the environment.

—ABI JABINES,
Task Force Plastic/
Extended Producer
Responsibility
Ecowaste Coalition,
abi.gaia@no-burn.org

Contrasting styles, contrasting views

TWO COLUMNS THAT APPEARED in the Feb. 25 edition of the INQUIRER showed their authors' contrasting styles and different views on the "state of emergency." Upon reading "State defends itself" by Belinda Olivares-Cunanan and "Déjà vu all over again" by Rina Jimenez-David, I easily could distinguish which column was deserving of credit, well thought-out and objective.

Cunanan stated: "Our budget deficit has shrunk as government revenues have risen. In other words, the economy is looking good. But our political situation remains unstable. Why does it have to be so?" Is the columnist unaware, wittingly or unwittingly, of what and who are actually rocking the boat nowadays? Does the columnist honestly believe that the economy is really looking good as of Feb. 25, 2006?

On the other hand, the contents and opinion expressed in the column of David showed a lucid, logical, fair and square assessment—in accordance with the principles of objective journalism—of the issues of the day, including the basis for Proclamation 1017. Summing up David's column was the statement: "What a way to celebrate the spirit of Edsa!" Just read the entire column once more.

—GUILLERMO R. VIOJAN,
201 Landcom Village,
Mindanao Avenue, Quezon City

All dictatorships come to an end

AS FOODFIRST INFORMATION & Action Network (Fian) Philippines expected, Proclamation 1017, issued by Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, resulted in gross violations of the people's civil and political rights. Even after its lifting, peaceful assemblies are still being banned, the media are being threatened into following government "censorship" standards, and party-list representatives are being falsely charged with rebellion.

Ms Arroyo should be reminded that all illegitimate leaders fall. Idi Amin of Uganda, Ceausescu of Romania, Suharto of Indonesia and our very own Marcos were all swept away from power despite their dictatorial regimes. In all probability, this is what will befall Ms Arroyo. Ordinary Filipinos will eventually join people's organizations, political parties, NGOs, Church associations, labor unions in throwing out a corrupt, abusive and illegitimate leader.

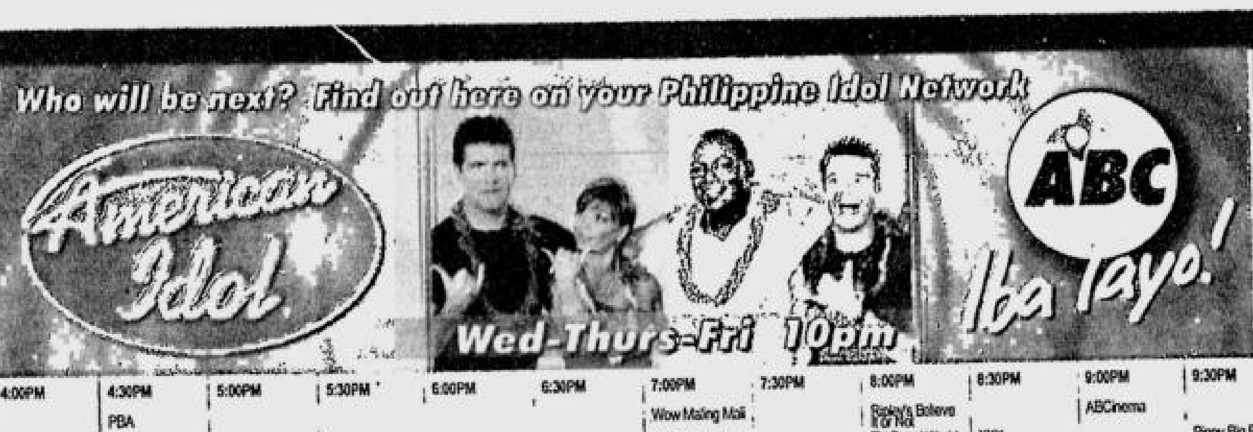
Ms Arroyo may have temporarily won the "battle" by declaring a state of emergency but the "war" will definitely be won by the people.

—RAFFY REY HIPOLITO,
policy advocacy officer,
Fian Philippines,
9B Matulungin St.,
Barangay Central, Quezon City

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

TV GUIDE

Saturday, March 25, 2006


Who will be next? Find out here on your Philippine Idol Network
American Idol
Wed-Thurs-Fri 10pm
ABC
Iba Tayo!

Presented by ClickTheCity.com

Channel	2:30PM	3:00PM	3:30PM	4:00PM	4:30PM	5:00PM	5:30PM	6:00PM	6:30PM	7:00PM	7:30PM	8:00PM	8:30PM	9:00PM	9:30PM	10:00PM	10:30PM	11:00PM	11:30PM
ABC 5		KNN	Anime Ring Kaisho		PBA					Wow Maling Mali		Ripley's Believe It or Not		ABCinema					
ABS-CBN 2	ETK				Little Big Star		Komiks			Quizon Avenue		TV Patrol World	XXX		Pinoy Big Brother	Sabado Movie Greats			
AXN		Half Past Dead				The Contender Best of Fight Scenes Special		WRC 2006: Rally XS	E Buzz	The 4400 (Season 2)		The Amazing Race (Season IX)		Lost (Season II)		National Security			
Cartoon Network	Foster's Home For Imaginary Friends		The Grim Adventures Of Billy & Mandy		The Life & Times Of Juniper Lee	Xiaolin Showdown	Teen Titans	Justice League Unlimited	The Batman	The Pagemaker			The Grim Adventures Of Billy & Mandy (8:45 PM)	Battle B-Daman	The Gransazers	Loonatics Unleashed	The Batman	Justice League Unlimited	Aqua Teen Hunger Force/Sealab 2021
Cinema One	My First Romance				So Happy Together				My Movie				Kaaway ng Batas				Japanese Horror Film		
Cinemax	Nowhere To Run (2:45 PM)			Deep Evil (4:15 PM)			Chaos (5:45 PM)				Intolerable Cruelty			Boiling Point			Lethal Dose		
CNN	The Daily Show With Jon Stewart	World News	World Business This Week	World News	International Correspondents	World News	World Sport	Larry King Live		World News	Next@CNN	World News	International Correspondents	World News	World Sport	World News	Talk Asia	World News	The Daily Show With Jon Stewart
Crime/Suspense	Forensic Files	Bones		Profiler		North Mission Road	Body Of Evidence	Crossing Jordan		Surface		Bones		Prison Break		Good Fellas			
Discovery Channel		Raising The Kursk		Unsolved History		Power Zone				Zero Hour		New Detectives		Crime Stories		A Haunting		American Chopper	
Disney Channel	Lizzie McGuire	Totally Spies-Double Episodes		Brandy & Mr. Whiskers		Buzz on Maggie	Mr. Bean	Phil Of The Future	Suite Life Of Zack And Cody		Wonderful World Of Disney			Mr. Bean	America's Funniest Home Video	Kim Possible	Martin Mystery	Wonderful World Of Disney	
ESPN		Pool Snooker World Pool League '03 Poland		Winter X-Games X - Day 3			Winter X Games Classic	World Pool Masters '02 Finals		World Pool League '02 Finals		Pool Mosconi Cup '02		Winter X Games Classic CO USA	NBA Game Bucks @ Lakers				
ETC		Love Shack		Insider Week-end/Naked On	Will & Grace 4	Saturday Night Live		The O.C. 2		Beauty & The Geek		Queer Eye For The Straight Guy		Saturday Night Live		Entertainment Tonight	The Insider	The Tonight Show With Jay Leno	
EWTN	Miracles Of The Child Jesus	Angelus (3:15 PM)	Image Of God	Adventures In Odyssey	Knights Of St. Michael	Rosary With Mother Angelica	The Church And The Poor: Building Bridges	Catholic Compass		The World Over Encore		Fr. John Corapi		Daily Mass (SAP) Live		Angelus (10:15 PM)	Sacraments Through The Ages	Life on The Rock Encore	
Fox News		Hannity & Colmes		On The Record With Greta Van Susteren		The O'Reilly Factor		Your World With Neil Cavuto		Special Report With Brit Hume		Fox & Friends Saturday						Bulls & Bears	Cavuto On Business
GMA 7	Startalk			Wish Ko Lang		Wag Kukurap -	Pinoy Pop Superstar		Bitoy's Funniest Videos Kapuso Mo, Jessica Soho		Imbestigador		Hokus Pocus			Showbiz Stripped			
Hallmark Channel	Ladies Man	Ladies Man	Hawking			The Frighteners (5:15 PM)				Mystery Woman: Snapshot				Frederick Forsyth's Icon					
HBO			Relentless			Back To The Future				Batman Forever				Connie and Carla			Deadwood Ep 14 "A Lie Agreed Upon Part 2"		The Boxer
Hero TV	Mon Colle Knights	Mars The Terminator	Shaider	Masked Rider Ryuki	Gransazer	Shaman King	Bucky the Kid	Musumet	The X-Treme Team	Machine Robo Rescue	Mon Colle Knights	Mars The Terminator	Hero TV Tiktatok			Love Hina	The X-Treme Team	Bubu Chacha	Musumet
IBC 13		Home Shopping Network		Nobora Pizzakeeper	Good Take	Home Shopping Network		Pangarap Kong Jackpot		Global Family Series		Japan Video Topics		Bitag		Philippine Sabong Sports			
JackTV	X-Men	JLU	The Batman	X-Play	Cinematech	Bottomline		Raw				Banzai	Banzai	Mad TV		South Park	South Park	Drawn Together	Crank Yankers
Lifestyle Network	Carol Duvall	HGTV Special		Sheila Bridges Designer Living	Radical Sabbatical	Simply Wine With Andrea Immer	Food Fight	Dolo Plate	Emeril Live		Iron Chef America		Merge		NY Fashion Week	How Do I Look		El Extra: Jackie Collins Presents: Scandalous	
MTV Philippines	MTV Hits		Bing # 106	Making the Video Unpredictable	The 2006 TRL Awards			Homecoming	Punk'D	Wild N' Out	MTV Cribs	Backstage Pass: Bandmates - Lilac	Backstage Pass: Bandmates - Lilac	Chart Attack		Brand New	Massive	Jams	Rockola
MYX	Pop MYX	MYX Bandarito	MYX News	MYX Presents		Take 5		Top Of The Pops	Star MYX	OPM MYX	Pop MYX	MYX Live!		Pinoy MYX Countdown				MYX Backtrax	MYXilog
National Geographic		Strange Days On Planet Earth		No Borders				Be The Creature		Built For The Kill		Hidden Worlds		Terrorism Week				No Borders	
NBN		Teledyaryo Alas-Tres		Teledyaryo Sports Atbp		Teledyaryo		Tinig ng Bayan (Live)		Talk To Harry		GSIS Member's Hour		Isla Hour On NBN		Talk Ko 'To		Krusada Kontra Krimen	
Nickelodeon	Drake & Josh	Chalkzone	Trollz	The Fairly Odd Parents	Catscratch	Avatar The Last Airbender	Danny Phantom	Zoey 101	Ned's Declassified School Survival Guide	Dark Oracle	Unfabulous	The Adventures Of Jimmy Neutron	The Fairly Odd Parents	As Told By Ginger	Girls In Love	The Brothers Garcia	The Amanda Show	My Dad The Rock Star	
PBO			Palimos Ng Pag-ibig				Nagmula Sa Lupa				Palabra de Honor				Nag-iisang Ikaw				Ano Gusto Ko Sa Lalaki
Qtv		Kiddy Grade		The Prince Of Tennis		Candies		Fans Kita		Aytil Robot		Day-Off		Sabado Showdown				Groupee TV	
RPN 9		Global Window		Biyaheng Langit	Kids TV	Man & Machine		Global Window		Medical Investigation		CSI: Miami		Saturday Night Playhouse		Shepherd's Voice			
SBN 21								Sony Music Video		JA1		Oras Ng Himala		Oras ng Katotohanan				SBN Music Video	
Solar Sports		Badminton Phil Badminton Open Finals							GWS 12-2000	NBA Game Grizzlies @ Knicks					Boxing	Raceworld		World's Greatest Auto Shows	
Sports Plus					4th Samsung Golf Ayala	Gillette World Cup Preview 4	FIFA Preview Series 6	World Poker Tour 2				Ultimate Fighting Championship							
Star Movies	From Justin To Kelly			Out For A Kill (3:55 PM)			Father of the Bride (5:25 PM)			The Object Of My Affection				AVP: Alien Vs. Predator			John Carpenter's Ghosts Of Mars		
Star World		American Idol		Miami Vice		Wild Card		Less Than Perfect (Series 2)	The Drew Carey Show	The Chronicle: News From The Edge		TNA Xplosion		Ghost Hunters/ British Academy Of Film & TV Awards 2006		Enterprise		The Simpsons	Less Than Perfect (Series 2)
Studio 23				PBL Game 2				Sports TV	Ngiiig	Pinoy Big Brother		Survivor Panama		Studio 23 Presents					

TV SCHEDULES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE.

Bernas: Proponents of Cha-cha probably desperate

From page A1

(Con-Ass) or a constitutional convention (Con-con).

The people's initiative option is expected to rear its head today when barangay assemblies meet across the country in an apparent stepped up campaign to gather signatures for an overhaul of the Constitution.

Already, cash and sacks of rice are being dangled as rewards in some areas if they support Cha-cha, according to INQUIRER informants in Central Luzon. The going rate in Valenzuela City is P200 if you sign up, a barangay leader claimed.

Malacañang appeared to be averse to a Con-con, whose delegates are elected, while senators are stiffly opposed to a Con-Ass, to be composed of incumbent members of Congress, most of whom are Arroyo supporters.

The expected chief beneficiary of the signature drive will be President Macapagal-Arroyo, who has launched her own campaign to dismantle the 1973 Charter and set up a parliamentary system of government—a move which her critics said could help her thwart future impeachment moves and survive the scandals wracking her administration.

"It is real democracy in action," Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said of the so-called people's initiative to amend the Charter. He denied the Palace had a hand in the signature drive or was funding it.

Presidential Chief of Staff Michael Defensor said the campaign was an initiative of local leaders.

"That effort did not come from us or from the Palace," Defensor told reporters.

"If there are funds, that's probably funds coming from barangays or local governments," he said. "No government funds were used here."

Do you approve of the amendment of Articles VI
and VII of the 1987 Constitution changing the form
of government from the present bicameral-
presidential to a unicameral-parliamentary system
of government in order to achieve greater
efficiency, simplicity and economy in government;
and providing an Article XVIII as Transitory
Provisions for the orderly shift from one system to
another? . . .
NO !
ALSIKIN NA

THE "USUAL SUSPECTS:" Different groups oppose the government's launching of the people's initiative to amend the Charter saying that it is a shameless attempt by the Arroyo administration to ensure her hold on power until 2010. But the signature campaign goes into full swing today. RAFFY LERMA

Very Marcosian

"Very Marcosian," Senate President Franklin Drilon said, recalling that the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos also called barangay assemblies in 1973 where people, under the sword of martial law, were asked to raise their hands if they supported a new Constitution that paved the way for his 20-year rule.

"It's a technique used by Marcos to amend the Constitution. Then barangay officials would gather people in assemblies and say: 'Those in favor of amending the Constitution, please raise your right hand'," Drilon recalled.

In a people's initiative, a petition for amendments requires the signatures of at least 12 percent of the total number of registered voters and at least 3 percent of every congressional district's registered voters.

Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. said reports that barangay officials were dangling money and food, like rice, to get people to sign up were a throwback to the Marcos years.

Gov't tactician

"That's what Marcos did in 1973 in his bid to amend the Constitution. This people's initiative is being orchestrated by a Marcos tactician like [Local Government Secretary Ronaldo] Puno," Pimentel said in an interview.

Drilon accused the Department of Interior and Local Government and local officials of abusing the constitutional provision on people's initiative by pressing ahead with it despite the absence of a law on its implementation.

In 1997, the Supreme Court ruled that Congress had failed to pass a law on people's initiative to amend the Constitution. Republic Act. No. 6735 provides for a people's initiative but only on laws passed by Congress and local government units.

Sen. Manuel "Mar" Roxas II said he would file a resolution on Monday seeking an inquiry into a March 10 memorandum of the DILG directing local officials to conduct barangay assemblies as well as claims made by a barangay health worker on TV that she was promised money in exchange for her signature for the people's initiative.

P1,000 for signatures

Reports gathered by the INQUIRER in Central Luzon revealed that money or a half-cavan (25 kg) of rice had been given or were promised by some governors and mayors to barangay officials mobilized to gather signatures for Cha-cha.

In Olongapo City, village officials stand to get P1,000 for every five pages full of pro-Charter change signatures, said Aurora Broquil, chair of the Kilusan para sa Pambansang Demokrasya in Central Luzon. Her source was a local official in the city.

Olongapo Mayor James Gordon Jr. said he was not aware of such a scheme. "I have not given money [to barangay officials]," he said.

Denial

Broquil claimed the same ploy was being done in parts of Zambales, but Gov. Vicente Magsaysay denied this.

"*Walang pera* (There's no money)," he said.

In the villages of Reformista, Landing, Townsite and Luz in Limay, Bataan, packs of rice were given to barangay tanod (watchmen) last week, Broquil said.

In other parts of Bataan, she said, residents were told to attend village meetings because PhilHealth cards would be distributed.

"Some people reported that they were surprised when they were asked to affix their signatures to a manifesto supporting the Cha-cha," Broquil said.

The so-called *"palit-bigas"* or signature in exchange for rice was happening in Palihan in Hermosa, Alauli in Pilar and Mabatang in Abucay, according to Joseph Canlas, chair of the Alyansa ng Magbubukid sa Gitnang Luzon.

Gov. Enrique Garcia did not answer calls and a text message to his mobile phone.

In Pampanga, Liberal Party leader Anthony Dee accused Mabalacat Mayor Marino Morales of buying signatures. The prices ranged from P150 to P300 each, Dee alleged. Morales denied the allegation.

In Angeles City, a barangay *kagawad* reported receiving 10 sheets each that needed to be filled with a total of 100 signatures. A kagawad said he was told "not to force" the residents to sign.

Josefina Castilla-Go, local government director in Central Luzon, said her office had not received reports of signature-buying or barangay leaders being paid to go all-out for Cha-cha.

P50 short

According to a barangay leader in Valenzuela, the instruction to give P200 to every signatory supporting Cha-cha came from an undersecretary at the DILG.

"We were supposed to give P200 per signatory but they would release only P50 and the rest would be provided by the local government," said the barangay leader, who asked not to be identified.

"There were only four of us in the room when it was discussed," the source said.

According to the source, those present were surprised to hear the new allocation because they were told earlier that P400 was allotted by the DILG for every signatory during the barangay assembly.

"P200 before signing and a bonus of P200 after," said the source.

Puno vowed to go after any DILG executive, local officials and barangay executives found to be paying off people for their signatures.

Puno has no idea about payoffs

Puno said he had no idea that Charter change would be tackled during the barangay assemblies today and that signatures were already being gathered supposedly with imprimatur from his office.

"If (payoffs are) occurring, I hope that specific reports would be given to us. I will initiate the filing of charges against any DILG or barangay official caught offering money for the signatures to this supposed campaign for Charter change," Puno said.

Former Social Welfare Secretary Corazon Soliman and anti-Cha-cha groups said they had received reports that money and rations of rice were changing hands in exchange for the signatures.

"Health workers themselves are saying those collecting signatures are being paid P200," Soliman said. *With reports from Nancy Carvajal, Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk, and Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

'GMA rating still down but a little less bad'

From page A1

emergency (Feb. 24 to March 3) and the Feb. 26 Marine standoff at Fort Bonifacio.

In the March survey, 29 percent of those polled said they were satisfied with her performance while the percentage of those dissatisfied stood at 54 percent, for a net satisfaction rating of -25, SWS said.

Dissatisfaction throughout

In December, by comparison, fewer people (24 percent) were satisfied with her performance, while the same proportion (54 percent) were dissatisfied, for a net rating of -30 during that period.

Dissatisfaction with Ms Arroyo "still predominates throughout the country" and is highest in Metro Manila at net -37, the statement said.

It said the next most dissatisfied area was now Mindanao (net -32), instead of the Balance of Luzon (net -23), which was the second-most dissatisfied area last December.

Middle, upper classes

"As usual, the least dissatisfied area is the Visayas (net -12)," SWS said.

Compared to December, Ms Arroyo's rating rose in the Balance of Luzon (up 11 points net), Metro Manila (up 8 points net), and the Visayas (up 4 points net).

But it fell in Mindanao (down 7 points net).

Ms Arroyo's net satisfaction rating improved among the *masa*, or class D, from -30 in December to -22 in March, SWS said.

But it hardly changed among the middle/upper ABCs and among the very poor Es.

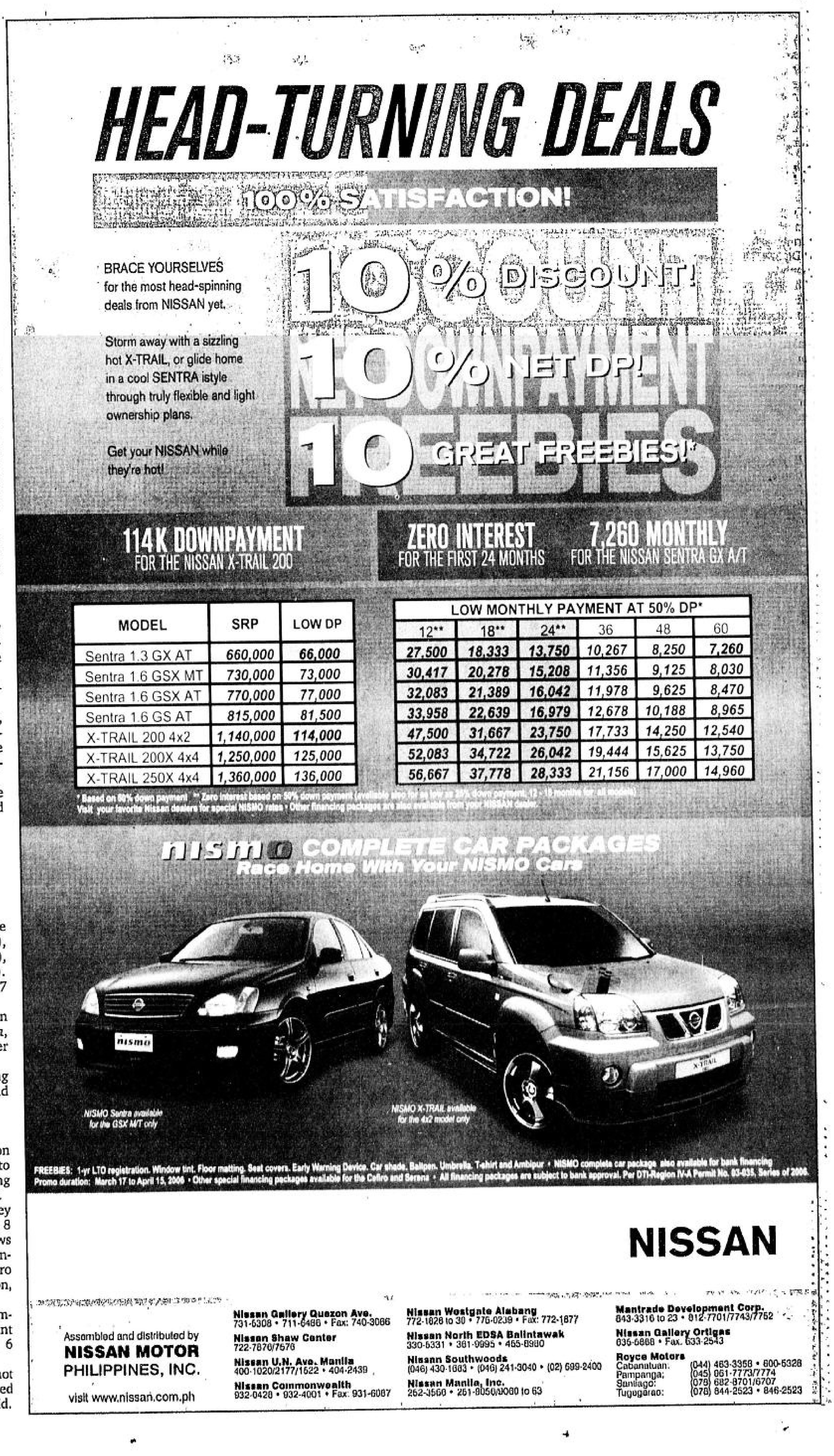
1,200 respondents

Among men, her net satisfaction rating is -22 in March compared to -35 last quarter, while among women it is -27 versus -25 before.

SWS said it carried out its survey for the first quarter from March 8 to 14, using face-to-face interviews of 1,200 adults divided into random samples of 300 each in Metro Manila, the Balance of Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao.

It said the survey had a sampling error margin of 3 percent for national percentages and 6 percent for area percentages.

The items in survey were not commissioned, but were included on SWS's own initiative, SWS said.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X-TRAIL 200 4x2	1,140,000	114,000	47,500	31,667	23,750	17,733	14,250	12,540
X-TRAIL 200X 4x4	1,250,000	125,000	52,083	34,722	26,042	19,444	15,625	13,750
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INQUIRER Visayas

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Bureau Chief Edralyn L. Benedicto

It's doctor's turn to help foundation

By Carla P. Gomez
Bacolod City

A YOUNG NEGRENSE DOCTOR HAS COMMITted herself to devote time for medical missions to help sugar farm workers and their families because a few years back, she, too, was given a break that changed the course of her life.

Dr. Ma. Rochelle Calleja, 28, is on her third year of residency training for a diploma in obstetrics and gynecology at the Corazon Locsin Montelibano Memorial Regional Hospital in Bacolod City.

Rochelle is among the 64,491 scholars of the Sugar Industry Foundation Inc. (Sifi) from 1975 to 2005, Sifi president Edith Vilanueva said. Sifi has provided grants worth over P90 million to 51,726 high school students, college assistance to 3,840, vocational training to 5,112, college scholarships to 258, and skills training to 3,555.

The foundation gets its funding from the P10 per picul that sugar producers contribute to a social amelioration fund collected by the government for various needs of workers in the sugar industry.

Rochelle is the eldest of four children of Ernesto Calleja, 57, a machine operator at First Farmers Holding Corp. in Talisay City, Negros Occidental, for more than 30 years. Her mother Clarita, 55, is a homemaker.

Rochelle obtained her Bachelor of Science in Biology degree from the University of Saint La Salle in Bacolod through a Handumanan scholarship and help from First Farmers Holding Corp.'s Educational Development Program.

After finishing college, Rochelle told her father she wanted to go to medical school. But he said the family could not afford it and it was time for her to get a job so she could help her other siblings.

"I was in tears. I begged my father to at least send me to first year medical school, and if I could not pass my subjects, I would stop dreaming of becoming a doctor," she said.

Rochelle said she passed the entrance exam of the West Visayas State University in Iloilo, a state-owned university that charges tuition of only P5,000 a semester. Expenses for board and lodging, and books were difficult to meet, however, she said. By the second semester, she was desperate as her father had said they simply could not afford medical school.

DR. ROCHELLE Calleja attends to the children of sugar farm workers in a medical mission organized by the Sugar Industry Foundation Inc.
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The letter

Rochelle said she knew Sifi did not grant scholarships for medical school students, but she decided to take the risk. On June 16, 1999, she wrote a letter to then Sifi executive director Danilo Gamboa to plead her case.

She was a dependent of a sugar industry worker, she said, and that she was fervently requesting that Sifi consider her plight.

"You can change the course of my life and lift the heavy burden off my parents' shoulders," she said. "I am pursuing medicine with dogged determination that despite numerous problems financially, emotionally and physically I have survived my first difficult year in college."

She told Gamboa that it was unfortunate that she was born poor and her parents could not afford to send her to the best schools, much more to see her through medical school.

"I have been dependent on other people's generosity all throughout my education, having maintained the required grades. I feel so blessed that the Almighty God never runs out of people to help me realize my dreams and get me out of this vicious cycle of poverty I am in now."

Without the foundation's support, she said, she would end up just another "poor individual with a sad story to tell, with shattered self-esteem and broken dreams."

Apparently moved by her letter, Sifi exempted Rochelle from its rule by providing her tuition, allowances for books, and board and lodging, and other needs until she passed the board exams, she said.

Dreams come true

"Sifi took a big risk on me and I am very thankful," the scholar said.

She said she was made to commit herself to practice as a doctor for 10 years in Negros Occidental. This was not a problem, she said, because after her residency, she hoped to work in Silay City.

Nowadays, she tries to join every medical mission of Sifi, attending to the needs of farm workers and their families.

To the workers, seeking medical help is an extra and huge burden on their budget so the medical missions really help a lot, Rochelle said.

"Other people helped me once; it's my turn now to help others," she said.

An erotic sonnet a day in Iloilo tabloid gets mixed reviews

By Ma. Diosa Labiste
Iloilo City

EVERYDAY SINCE FEBRUARY, A HILIGAYNON tabloid, Hublas nga Kamatuoran (Naked Truth), publishes an erotic sonnet, a move that has earned it mixed reviews and more readers.

Sales of the newspaper in Iloilo City have improved, boosted by the popularity of the erotic sonnets among its low-income readers, said publisher Danny Fajardo.

But readership is not confined to those who peruse for prurient reasons because the poems speak to anyone who celebrates life, love and language.

The sonnets were written by Peter Solis Nery, a multi-awarded poet who was also a teacher, monk, politician, Dervish dancer, journalist, to name a few.

Before writing the 100 erotic sonnets, he tried to mount a nude protest when President Macapagal-Arroyo delivered her State of the Nation Address in 2004. He relented when he failed to get a permit to bare in front of the city's Arroyo Fountain.

Nery is a self-styled avant-garde columnist, comparing his notoriety with that of Andy Warhol and pop star Madonna, the mother diva of reinvention.

Nery's sonnets take liberties at the literary form, something that some critics chaff at. While these have 14 lines, the poems do away with rhyme scheme or meter. Noticeable are the eight-line octaves broken in two stanzas that present an attitude, question or proposition that the next six lines (sextets) comment on or resolve.

Sonnets

The sonnets in Hiligaynon are melodious and sensual despite the unrestrained use of language to express desire, longing and excitement. Sometimes, their power lies at the concluding couplet or in the abstract comment delivered at the end.

XXIV

Pila ka bulan, pila ka tuig bag-o nalibot ni Magellan
ang bug-os nga kalibutan? Ano nga mga baraghal nga kagamitan
ang iya ginlalang agud lamang masalapuan ang mga isla
nga nagalutaw-lutaw sa sadto wala-panamapa ng kadagatan,

Ginteleskopyo bala niya ang berde nga pukatod
nga daw mga dughan sang higante gikan sa iya sakayan-dagat.
Nahikap bala niya ang mga ulutngan kag ang mga pilas
Nga na-angkon sang mga likum sang bituon nga Polaris?

Ano ang mga bagyo nga iya ginsugata, kag diin sya nagpalipud
sang ang misteryo daw kweba nga nagbuka para sa dumuluaw?
Waa bala siya nalumos sa mga haluk, o nayanggaw sang talon

Sa gintabuan sang mga hita? Natilawan bala ni Magellan
Ang kamulagko sang nawala nga tiil, o ang damil sang dulunggan?
Ang paglutahit sang bug-os nga lawas, paglibot sang kalibutan.

(How many months, how many years, did it take Magellan
To sail around the world? What crude instruments
Did he use to find those islands and continents
Floating, drifting in the still unmapped seas?

What typhoons did he meet, and where did he hide
When mystery caved open to welcome strangers?
Did he not drown in kisses, or get enchanted by the forest

At the point where the thighs converge? Did Magellan try
The big toe of the left foot, or the taste of an earlobe?
To travel the length of the body is to circumnavigate the world.)

Breaking convention

Nery said the erotic sonnets sought to break convention in Hiligaynon and Kinaray-a writing, "where sex is always replaced by metaphors and such literary devices as the full moon covering behind the clouds."

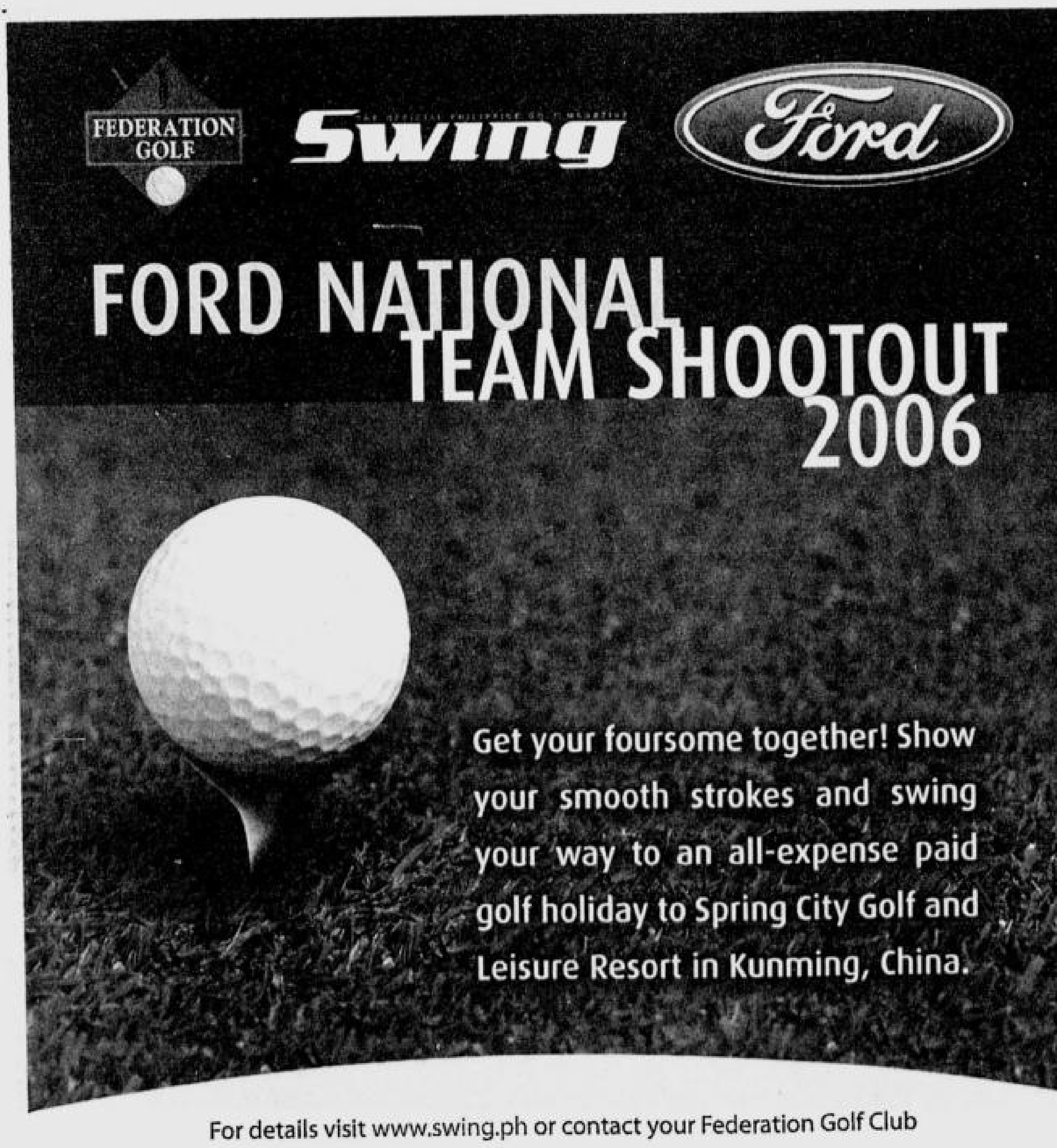
"What is there to fear in sex?" he added.

While some sonnets celebrate homo-eroticism, Nery said he also reclaimed heterosexual sex. The speaker or the persona is maybe a she or a he; sometimes he is a voyeur, sometimes she is a participant.

Luyag ko hikapon ka sa liwat, halukan, kag palanggaon;
labaw pa sa akon pagdihon sining binalaybay sang kaulag,
labaw pa sa pagpakighirup sang mapalaron nga tinta sa papel.

(I want to touch you again, kiss you, and make love to you;
More than me lustfully composing this poem of desire,
More than lucky ink making crazy love to paper.)

The sonnets are awaiting a book publisher but, meanwhile, they are enclosed in a plastic binding folder and assigned numbers like songs in a karaoke bar. And so, to recite them is to call out the numbers first, to mark out the sonnets, and remember that they are part of a body of work.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March 25 - Pueblo de Oro Golf & Country, Cagayan de Oro
April 1 - Canlubang Golf & Country Club, Canlubang, Laguna
April 1 & 6 - Mt. Malarayat Golf & Country Club, Lipa, Batangas
April 1 & 2 - Orchard Golf & Country Club, Dasmarinas, Cavite
April 1 & 3 - Tagaytay Highlands Int'l. Golf Club, Tagaytay
April 2 - Eastridge Golf Club, Inc. Binangonan, Rizal
March 28 & 30 - Royal Northwoods Golf Club, Inc. Bulacan
April 4-9 - Sta. Elena Golf Club, Sta. Rosa, Laguna
April 5 - Negros Occidental Golf & Country Club
April 6 - Forest Hills Golf & Country Club, Inc. Antipolo City
April 7 - Manila Southwoods Golf & Country Club, Carmona, Cavite
April 8 & 9 - Camp John Hay Golf Club, Baguio
April 9 - Iloilo Golf & Country Club, Iloilo
April 8 - Manila Golf & Country Club, Forbes Park
April 8 & 9 - Valley Golf & Country Club, Cainta, Rizal
April 8 - Wack-Wack Golf & Country Club, Mandaluyong
April 22 - Eagle Ridge Golf & Country Club, Gen. Trias, Cavite

Stage 2: Satellite Elimination in each district
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Stage 3: Grand Finals

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GLOBE TELECOM

Plantations drying up Davao City water sources

DAVAO CITY—AN ENVIRONMENTAL activist from Cebu City warned of the wanton destruction of the watershed areas of this city, saying the city could soon be gasping for clean and fresh water.

Aida Granert, of the Cebu-based Soil and Water Conservation Foundation, said the destruction of the city's watershed areas was being caused by the intrusion of agricultural plantations.

"You want to lose water? Put up plantations in your upland watershed areas and kiss your water goodbye," Granert said before a forum held in time for the celebration of the World Water Day on Wednesday.

A report made by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (Jica) in 1998, which was also cited in the World Bank's 2003 Environmental Monitor, said that Cebu and Davao would be among the major cities in the country that will face water shortage by the year 2025.

Jica said by 2025, Davao would be 45 percent short of its water needs while Cebu would be 82 percent short.

"I was not afraid to drink water straight from my hotel room faucet (here). In Cebu, you can't do that without tasting the flavor of our water which is chlorine. You are so lucky here because Davao is still a paradise," she said.

Granert said the people of Davao should work together to protect their water sources.

"You should be very vigilant and work really hard for this because this means fighting for your own life … water is life. Don't wait for Davao to become the next Cebu," she said.

For 17 years now, Granert has extensively worked for the protection of Cebu's watershed.

In Cebu, she said, only about 0.08 percent of the mountains remain green.

"The forest is supposed to be the soul of the community. It is supposed to be the soul of the people … it is supposed to be where the source of life and if we destroy our forests in favor of temporary development, we are sort of killing ourselves already," she said.

An estimated 6,000 hectares of lands in the watershed areas of Davao had already been converted to pineapple and banana plantations. The monoculture approach of plantation and their reliance to synthetic chemicals are seen by many as environmentally destructive and dangerous to the health of the people.

The Davao City Water District has identified the Panigan-Tamugan rivers as the future source of drinking water for the city yet hundreds of hectares of plantations have proliferated near the tributaries.

"There has been intense debate especially on the issue of proliferation and expansion of plantations, devoted to bananas and pineapple among others. There has been continuing discussion on the threat that these heavily pesticide-dependent monoculture farms pose to our upland watershed," said Lia Jasmin Esquillo of the Interface Development Interventions Inc. (Idis).

Idis is behind a growing call here for a moratorium on the expansion of banana and pineapple plantations and the banning of aerial spraying of chemicals.

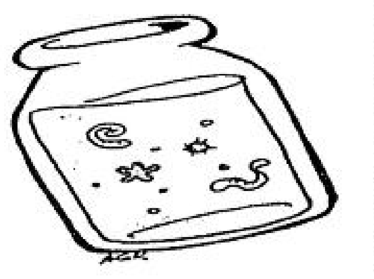
"There should be no letting up in the fight for the protection of our sources of water, the recharge areas and aquifers. There is a looming crisis worldwide," Esquillo said. *Jeffrey Tupas, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

ROUNDUP

2 workers buried alive

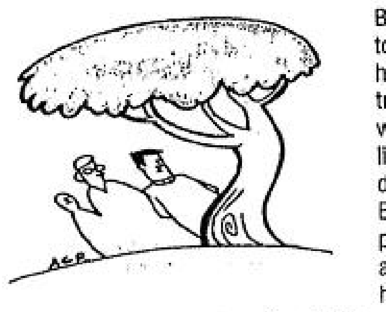
LUCENA CITY—Two construction workers were killed and one was seriously wounded Friday morning after the wall of the building that they were working on in Talisay, Batangas collapsed and buried the victims. PO1 Antonio Umahon, of the Talisay police station, identified the victims as Benedicto Navales and Dionisio Torion, both construction workers of the Well-Off Blessing Construction Co. based in Cainta, Rizal. The wounded was identified as Ricky Padilla who was rushed to a hospital in Dasmariñas, Cavite. Umahon said the collapse happened in Midland Subdivision in Barangay Tranca, Talisay town near the boundary of Tagaytay City. "The incident was reported to the police station at past noon. We were told by the construction guards that they first tried to rescue the victims but to no avail," the police said in a phone interview. He said all the victims were not natives of the place. "The construction site was elevated. The scaffoldings gave in to the weight of the wall and buried the two workers. Maybe, the soil became loose because of erosion," Umahon said. *Delfin Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Contaminated water



GENERAL SANTOS CITY—The Municipal Health Office of Malungon, Sarangani has confirmed the presence of germs and contaminants in the drinking water supplied to town residents. Malungon municipal health officer Dr. Rafaida Hernandez told the INQUIRER that tests made on a water sample brought to them by a complaining resident showed the presence of a worm and other organisms. She did not say what the worm was. As of Thursday noon, Hernandez said that 56 residents had already signed a petition asking the local government to immediately investigate the matter and order the Malungon Water District (MWD) to provide an alternative supply to residential areas. Hernandez said based on the results of initial tests, the water coming from MWD "is really not suitable for drinking." She said she immediately called on Henrylito Pactes, MWD manager, to take the necessary steps to rid their water supply of contaminants. But she said Pactes simply ignored her request and dismissed the results of the test. Hernandez said Pactes only told her that non-harmful worms are normally present in water. She said because of the refusal of the water utility's management to comply with the request, she has asked the local government to step in and temporarily suspend MWD's operation. *Aquiles Zonio, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Image appears on tree

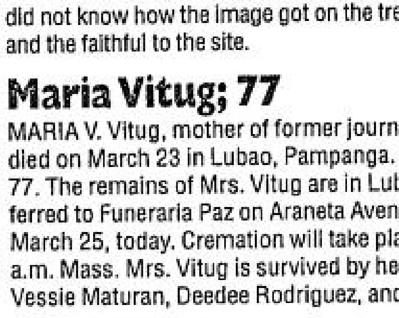


BACOLOD CITY—An image believed to be that of the Virgin Mary and a heart that suddenly appeared on the trunk of a cotton tree along the highway at Sitio Bug-as, in Barangay Balintawak, Escalante City has been drawing crowds since Wednesday. But Fr. Christopher Exala, Escalante's parish priest, yesterday said the image should be investigated because he did not believe that the appearance of the image on the tree is a miracle. Ernie Gutierrez, an employee of the Escalante city government, said he and his co-employees went yesterday to see the image of the Virgin Mary on the tree during their lunch break and saw people lining up to get a glimpse of it. Gutierrez said he and his companions took pictures of the image on the tree. Some people had handkerchiefs and pieces of cloth that they pressed on the image, believing that it may have some curative powers, he said. There were also those who placed flowers and candles beneath the cotton tree and prayed. Escalante Mayor Santiago Barcelona said he did not know how the image got on the tree, but it was luring curious people and the faithful to the site. *Carla Gomez, PDI Visayas Bureau*

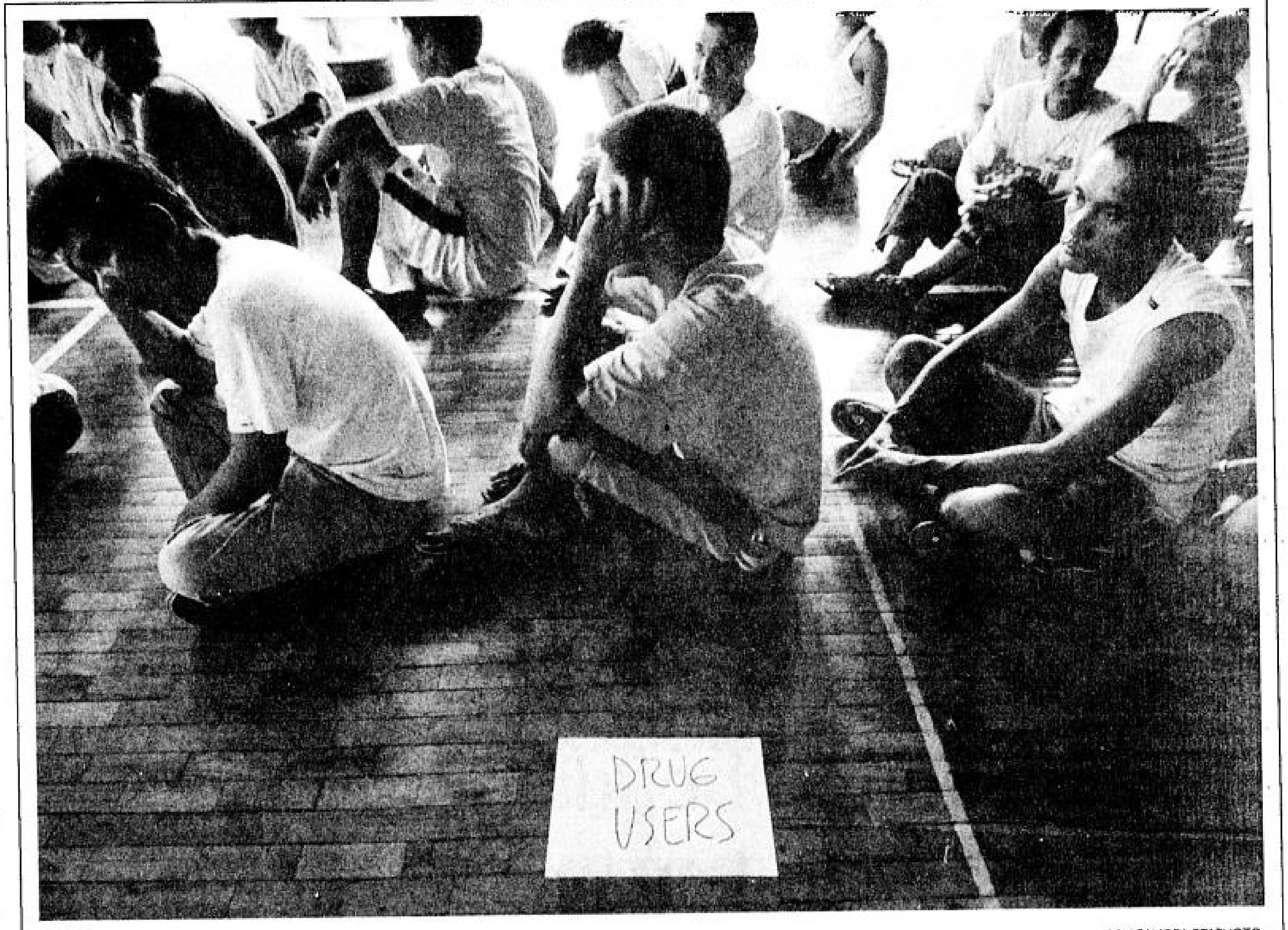
Maria Vitug; 77

MARIA V. Vitug, mother of former journalists Virgilio and Vittorio Vitug, died on March 23 in Lubao, Pampanga. She died of heart failure. She was 77. The remains of Mrs. Vitug are in Lubao Parish Church and will be transferred to Funeraria Paz on Araneta Avenue in Quezon City in the afternoon of March 25, today. Cremation will take place on March 28, Tuesday, after the 9 a.m. Mass. Mrs. Vitug is survived by her other children, Violet Catacutan, Vessie Maturan, Deedee Rodriguez, and Vivian Cancio.

'Richer' ARMM seen


WE'RE GROWING!

COTABATO CITY—The Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao will be richer with more provinces added to it when Maguindanao is divided into three new provinces: Iranun, Maguindanao and Rajah Buayan. Yielding to a long-standing commitment to and clamor by the Iranun Muslims of Lower Cotabato Valley, Maguindanao Gov. Datu Andal Ampatuan Sr. is pushing the subdivision of his province with the Regional Legislative Assembly of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM). Under its Charter, the ARMM, through the RLA, can create barangays, municipalities and provinces, the way Congress is mandated with such power. *Nash Maulana, PDI Mindanao Bureau*



REM ZAMORA/PDI PHOTO

TAG
Some of the 75 suspected pushers and drug users who were rounded up by agents of the National Bureau of Investigation in a raid in a shabu flea market in Bulacan are held in the NBI office in Manila.

Troops to guard road projects, says Army general

LUCENA CITY—THE TOP OFficial of the military's Southern Luzon Command based here in Camp Nakar has called on all government road contractors to coordinate with the military for protection against harassment by New People's Army rebels.

"It is our duty to protect all government projects for the benefit of the people. They should just coordinate with us and we're more than willing to provide them security until they finish the project," Lt. General Pedro Cabuay Jr., Solcom chief, said in an interview.

The military officer said the communist guerrillas do not want the government to finish development projects. "They want the people and the community to remain poor and undeveloped to suit their propaganda," Cabuay said.

The Department of Public Works and Highways admitted that the NPA's imposition of the so-called revolutionary taxes had forced two contractors, one of them Chinese-owned, to surrender the P616-million road project in Quezon.

The DPWH made the admission before an inquiry of the provincial council on Monday on the delay of the 54.5 km circumferential road project initiated by Quezon Rep. Rafael Nantes way back in 1998 during the term of former President Joseph Estrada.

The proposed highway will pass through the towns of Lucban, Tayabas, Mauban and Sampaloc.

Cabuay said the DPWH used to coordinate with the military for the security of government projects.

"But for this particular road project, we have not received any request for security assistance," he said.

Cabuay cited their experience during the construction of the now finished Bondoc Peninsula Highway.

He said after the communist rebels burned the construction equipment of the Korean contractor Keangnam in 1998, the military assigned in the area painstakingly guarded the project till its completion.

"After that unfortunate incident, my men provided close security to the road workers. Whenever they moved to another site, my men followed. That present stretch of highway was a big sacrifice for my men," Cabuay said. *Delfin Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

NPA spokesman offers refuge to Honasan

LUCENA CITY—IF FUGITIVE FORmer senator Gregorio "Gringo" Honasan has nowhere to hide, his namesake communist spokesperson Gregorio "Ka Roger" Rosal is offering him safe refuge inside any of the more than 100 New People's Army guerrilla fronts across the country.

"If Gringo feels that government forces are really hot on his trail, he can contact any of our field commanders for help. We will offer him safe protection inside our camp," Rosal said in a mobile phone interview.

But he made it clear that should Honasan decide to seek refuge inside an NPA camp, the fugitive former military officer should abide by the strict rules being imposed by the communist guerrillas.

"Ours is a spartan way of living. There's no luxury in there, no champagne or ice cold beer to cap the night. There's a lot of personal adjustment that he should do. But I can assure him that he is completely safe from the reach of his pursuers, if he's really been pursued," Rosal said.

However, he admitted that the case of Honasan, should he decide to seek the protection of the NPA, "is complicated." He did not elaborate. *Delfin Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

ROSAL

HONASAN

Closed mining firm leaves behind ₱260M in taxes, back wages

By Carla P. Gomez
PDI Visayas Bureau

BACOLOD CITY—MARICALUM Mining Corp. (MMC) in Sipalay City, Negros Occidental that shut down in 2001, still owes local governments more than P90 million in real property taxes and its employees about P170 million in back wages and separation pay.

Sipalay City Mayor Oscar Montilla said that the copper mining company owes his city more than P50 million in back taxes.

He said Maricalum also owed almost P40 million in real property taxes to Sipalay's neighboring town of Cauayan, where the company also used to operate a copper mine.

A check at the Negros Occidental's treasury office, however, showed that as of 2005, Maricalum owed Cauayan P52.2 million and Sipalay P47.8 million. The unpaid land taxes for both local government units were accumulated since 1998.

The Sipalay City government last year attempted to auction off MMC property to collect its tax delinquency but it was stopped by a temporary restraining order issued by the Court of Appeals in Cebu.

Montilla said they were still appealing the CA ruling.

The Sipalay mines, which started operating in 1957 in Barangay San Jose, were closed on July 2, 2001 because of a labor dispute and complaints of environmental pollution. The closure left more than 5,000 workers jobless.

Montilla said after the city's experience with MMC, they remained open to mining operators but would only allow responsible mining companies.

He said he had asked the help of environment lawyer Antonio Oposa and a German consultant to ensure that future mining operations in the city would strictly comply with environment laws.

Records obtained from the Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources showed that MMC continued to cause environmental problems despite it having ceased operation for almost five years.

An MGB report posted on its website said that after the company shut down, its inactive Tailings Pond No. 3, in Barangay Gil Montilla in Sipalay, continues to emit dust. It has an area of about 125 hectares.

The report said the dust emitted by the tailings pond has polluted the air in surrounding areas, causing increased respiratory related illnesses to residents.

The MGB report said the tailings pond contained over 111 metric tons of mine tailings (water waste) discharged over its 20 years of operation.

After the MMC ceased operation and without any new tailings discharge into the pond, a portion of the pond began to dry up. Dust accumulated starting in December 2001.

The volume of dust in the pond would peak during dry and windy months from December to April or May, according to the MGB report.

The dust fall-out in nearby areas reach five kilometers, south and southwest of the tailings pond, the report added.

The MGB in Western Visayas had recommended that MMC install a sprinkler system or flooding irrigation system to control the dust but MMC, instead, placed lines of "windbreaks" made of coconut fronds across the dry portion of the tailings pond and resorted to other methods.

The MGB quoted the MMC as saying that it was using cheap methods for controlling the dust because of financial difficulties and because of the loss of a sprinkler system that it was using before.

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Across the NATION

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Text us your feedback: inquirer atn name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart) *Assistant Editor* **Tony Bergonia**

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Sack DENR execs, President asked

LUCENA CITY—A LEGISLATOR and a Catholic bishop led multi-sectoral groups in northern Quezon in urging President Macapagal-Arroyo to replace top environment officials in the Southern Tagalog region and Quezon province due to alleged continuous illegal logging in the Sierra Madre mountain ranges.

In a petition initiated by Rep. Rafael Nantes and Infanta Bishop Rolando Tria Tirona, Antonio Principe, DENR regional director for Southern Tagalog and Emrich Borja, Quezon-DENR chief, have been criticized for alleged failure to combat illegal logging in Sierra Madre.

The DENR officials had earlier denied involvement in illegal logging and denied that timber poaching continues in Sierra Madre.

Aside from Nantes and Tirona, the petition was also being pushed by the Social Action Center (SAC), Task Force Sierra Madre (TFSM), Infanta and local officials of General Nakar town and TIPAN, a Church-based multi-sectoral organization in Infanta founded by Nantes and former Infanta Bishop Julio Labayen.

Catholic priest Fr. Pete Montallana, TFSM head, has confirmed that there has been such an intention to file a petition but he declined to furnish a copy to media.

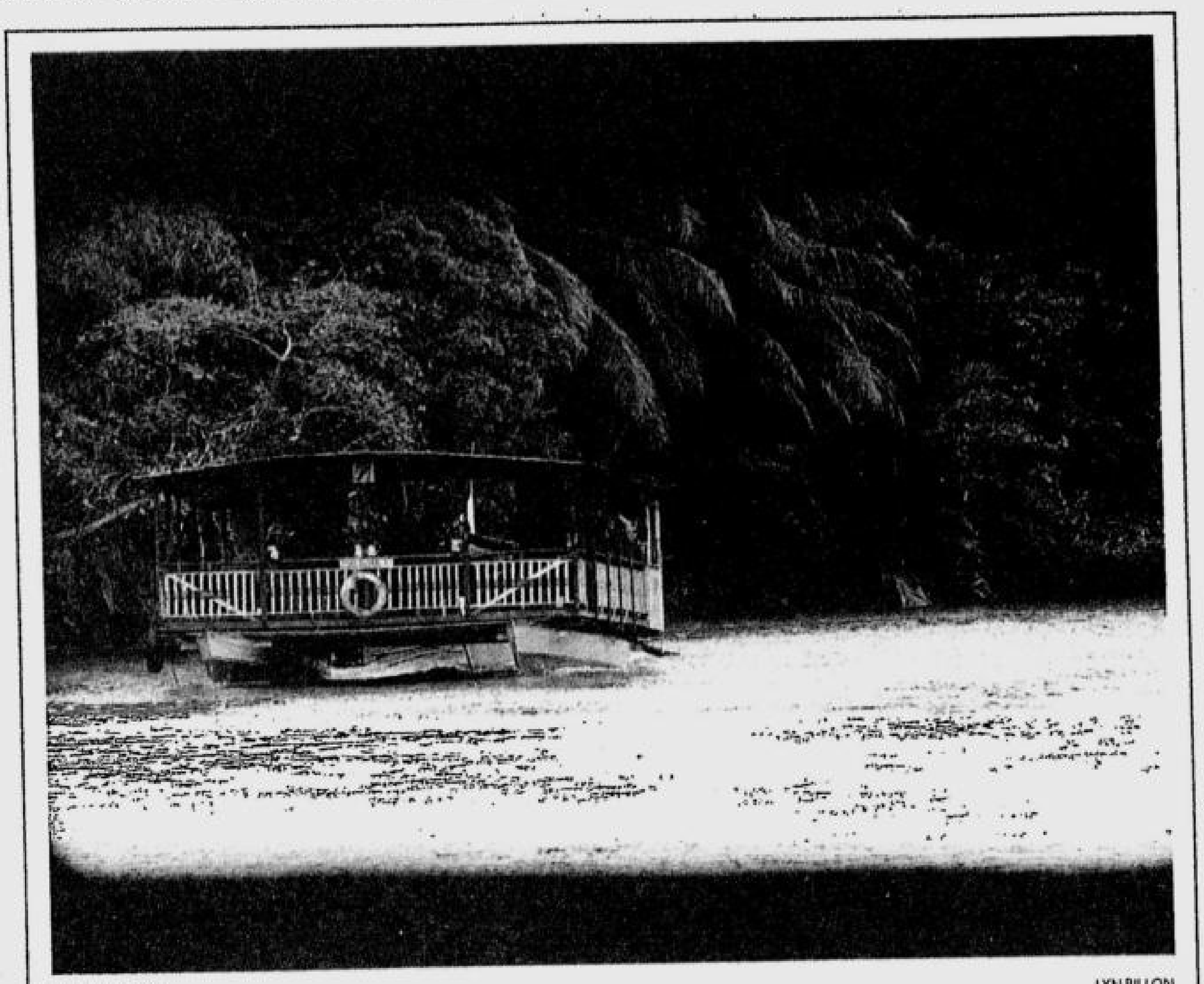
"We just don't want to preempt the petition. We will give copies once they are ready for submission to Malacañang. Sierra Madre logging, whether it's legal or illegal must be immediately stopped," he said over the phone.

Logging along the mountain ranges of the Sierra Madre has been identified as among the key causes of natural disasters that struck the area in 2004.

Last month, the TFSM presented a video footage featuring newly cut trees in Sierra Madre. Borja admitted that the unlawful cutting of trees is back along the mountain ranges.

The footage and the subsequent DENR admission about such illegal activity has prompted the Quezon provincial board to urge Ms Arroyo to order a stop to the continued destruction of Sierra Madre.

A week later after feeling the heat, the environment officials took a combative stance and instead accused SAC and TFSM of alleged involvement in illegal logging. *Delfin Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*



LYN RILLON

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A floating restaurant cruises along the pristine Loboc River in Loboc, Bohol. Tourists are treated to a buffet of local dishes while enjoying the view from the restaurant's deck.

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Filipino fishermen held in Vietnam

SUBIC, ZAMBALES—Seven fishermen from this province are being held in Phuyen, Vietnam, for their alleged failure to pay their bills in a hotel where they were staying after they were rescued off the waters of that country, a Zambales official said.

Vice Gov. Ramon Lacbain II said he has appealed to Foreign Secretary Alberto Romulo to help the fishermen.

Lacbain said he learned of the fishermen's plight when their wives came to him on Tuesday and sought his assistance.

He said the fishermen have been staying in a hotel in Phuyen since March 9 after they were found by crew members of a Vietnamese ship on top of their capsized fishing boat, F/B JR Rodel 3, along the territorial waters of Vietnam.

He identified the fishermen as Ian Jasper Tabios, 24; Harold Evangelista, 26; Efren Taytay, 35; Norman Rentillo, 29; Judy dela Cruz, 24; Jerry dela Cruz, 28; and Joffry Gobalani, 28, all residents of Barangay Calapandayan here.

"The wives of these fishermen came to my office and said they received a call from Ian Tabios telling them that they were safe and billeted in a hotel in Phuyen," Lacbain said.

"Tabios, however, said they were being held because of their mounting hotel bills. He said they were asked to pay $5,000," Lacbain said.

He said the fishermen left Subic town on Feb. 22 to fish in Palawan. However, strong winds swept their boat off the waters of Vietnam. *Allan Macatuno with a report from Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

Zambo fire destroys hundreds of homes

ZAMBOANGA CITY—HUNDREDS of people here were rendered homeless when a fire, triggered by an unattended lighted candle, broke out Thursday night in Barangay Camino Nuevo.

Major Janice Espero, chief of the city fire department, said the fire, considered the biggest to hit the city in years, started at Fermin Drive around 6:30 p.m.

It then spread to nearby Barangay Canelar before firefighters managed to put it under control.

When the fire was over, a 5-hectare area was reduced to ashes and debris.

The social welfare office said it was still consolidating the total number of people who lost their homes but conceded it could be over a thousand.

Espero placed the number of houses destroyed by the fire between 1,500 to 2,000.

"We estimated around P50 million worth of damages," she said.

The area razed by the fire included a slum.

City Health Officer Rodel Agbulos said a number of residents suffered minor injuries as they tried to salvage their belongings.

He said it was fortunate that no one died.

"Our firefighters worked so hard for six hours to put out the fire," Espero said. He said the fire was one of the biggest to hit the city.

Among those who helped put out the fire were volunteers from the Air Transportation Office, the Philippine Air Force, Aleson Shipping Lines and the Chinese community.

"We were not able to immediately put the fire off because the paths were too narrow. We cannot bring in the fire trucks and there was no water. Our problems were complicated by strong winds," she said.

Espero said based on their investigation, the fire was triggered by a lighted candle, which was left unattended in one of the houses.

Mayor Celso Lobregat said he already directed the disaster office and other agencies to extend help to the displaced families.

"This is the biggest fire we have had in this city," Lobregat said.

Francisco Barredo, city social welfare officer, said at least four areas had been designated evacuation centers, including the Ateneo de Zamboanga University. *Julie S. Alipala, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Lack of fish threatens Pangasinan 'buro' trade

BAYAMBANG, PANGASINAN—The *buro* (fermented fish and rice) industry of this central Pangasinan town is in peril due to lack of freshwater fish from the Mangabul fisheries reservation, Mayor Leocadio de Vera said.

Mangabul is a 2,059-hectare marshland between this town and Camiling and Moncada towns in Tarlac. It is crisscrossed by at least 10 creeks, the biggest of which is the Colisao Creek.

During summer, the whole area, including the creeks' banks, becomes a colorful field of rice, corn, vegetables and onions. On rainy days, 454 hectares of the reservation turn into a lake where different fish species abound.

But De Vera said the lake and the creeks have been heavily silted by lahar from Mt. Pinatubo and needed dredging. The long dry season has also contributed to the decreased fish catch.

He said Mangabul used to teem with catfish, mudfish, gourami, gray snapper (*alisu*) and other species, and the harvest was more than enough for the needs of residents.

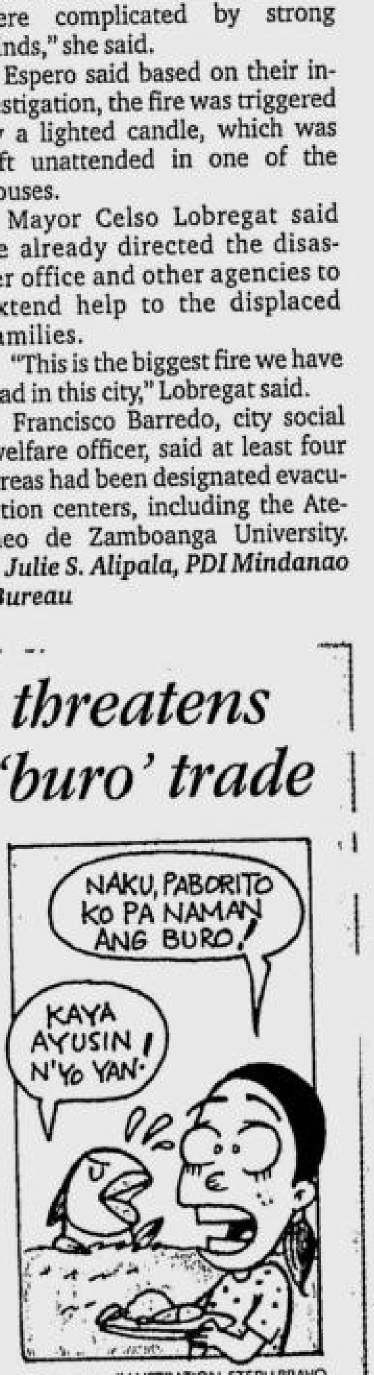
NAKU, PABORITO KO PA NAMAN ANG BURO!
KAYA AYUSIN N'YO YAN.

ILLUSTRATION: STEPH BRAVO

"But the harvest has been declining throughout the years," De Vera said.

Some makers of *buro* had to buy fish from other areas so they can continue making this native delicacy, he added.

He said the residents are actually looking forward to the heavy rains accompanying the La Niña weather phenomenon so the dried up creeks, fed by the Agno and Tarlac rivers, will have water again. *Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Aplus METRO

Editor Ester G. Dipasupil

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4 kidnap gang suspects killed

By Marlon Ramos,
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau
and Luige A. del Puerto

FOUR SUSPECTED GANG MEMBERS of the dreaded Waray Waray kidnap-for-ransom group, including its alleged leader, were killed in an encounter with anti-kidnapping operatives and the Rizal police just before dawn yesterday in Taytay, Rizal.

Senior Supt. Freddie Panen, Rizal police director, identified one of the slain suspects as Peter Soriña, said to be the gang leader.

Three other suspects have yet to be identified, while two more were able to escape. Recovered from the group were three .45 caliber pistols, a .38 caliber pistol and a hand grenade.

No police officer was hurt during the early morning shootout. "This is a big blow to kidnappers," said Deputy Director General Oscar Calderon, chief of the Presidential Anti-Crime and Emergency Response (Pacer), the elite anti-kidnapping police unit.

Group under surveillance

The police said they recently received information that Soriña and several other gang members had been sighted in Barangay Ugong, Pasig City. Pacer operatives placed the area under surveillance and confirmed the KFR leader's presence.

Panen said the suspects were spotted at 3 a.m. yesterday while they were boarding a white Mitsubishi Adventure (WLT 324) in Pasig.

"When the suspects noticed they were being monitored, they fired at the vehicles of the Pacer operatives, leading to a one-hour running gun battle," Panen told the INQUIRER in a phone interview.

When the fleeing suspects headed for Rizal province, Panen said he ordered roadblocks set along major thoroughfares in the area. The suspects were eventually cornered in a vacant lot along a national highway in Barangay San Juan, Taytay town at around 4 a.m.

P300,000 bounty

Chief Supt. Prospero Noble, Calabarzon police director, said Soriña was included in the most wanted list of kidnappers in the Calabarzon region, and had a P300,000 reward for his capture.

Noble added that Soriña had a pending arrest warrant for the kidnapping and murder of a businessman whose body was dumped in a far-flung area in Angono, Rizal, a few days after he was abducted in Taytay town last year.

Soriña also had a standing arrest warrant, issued by a municipal court in Leyte, for robbery and homicide. Pacer officials said Soriña was a suspect in the kidnap of Carrie Choa in June 2005. "Choa has identified Soriña, through photos, as one of her abductors," Calderon said.

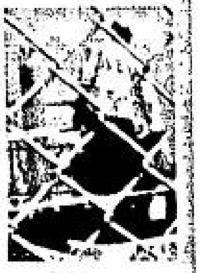
Kidnap cases up this year

The police disclosed yesterday that they had recorded 12 kidnap cases between January and March this year, a sharp increase compared to the six KFR cases recorded during the same period last year.

Last week, a risk consultancy firm had said weak rule of law, rampant corruption and ineffective law enforcement contributed to the Philippines' reputation as Asia's kidnapping hotspot.

Police officials did not contest the firm's findings but urged the media to directly ask victims or their families to assess police work.

WHAT'S INSIDE



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Ramon Tulfo

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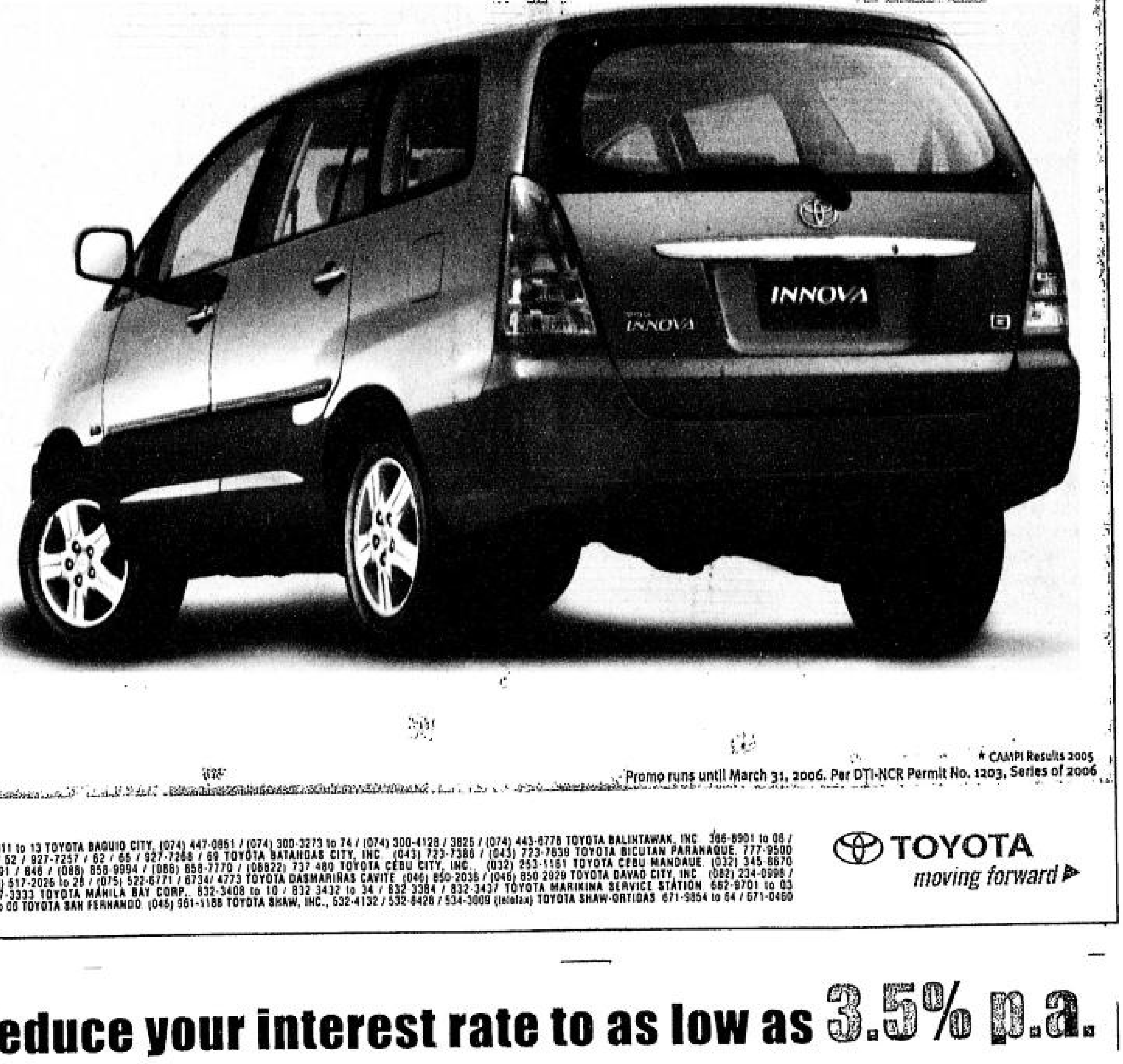

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Is Ping Lacson Erap's friend or foe?

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo

IF YOU HAVE SEN. PANFILO LACSON for a friend, you don't need enemies.

Lacson said Wednesday his former boss and friend, ex-President Erap, received jueteng money to fund his Muslim Youth Foundation.

Goodness gracious, the former Philippine National Police chief just buried Erap in the mud!

Erap's defense in his plunder trial is a complete denial—that he never received a single centavo from jueteng.

Now comes Lacson with the incriminating statement against his former commander-in-chief.

Even if Lacson's motive was to portray Erap as a philanthropist, he revealed a secret that would get the former president the death penalty..

Mahirap talagang magtago ng sekreto ang mga gaya ni Ping

* * *

THE FIRM is really living it up under the present dispensation. I'm referring to the law office of Villaraza and associates, whose clients include big business and top government people.

When the daughter of Pancho Villaraza, The Firm's major partner, got married recently at scenic Amanpulo resort in Palawan, no less than a Navy ship was allegedly dispatched to secure the area.

Defense Secretary Avelino Cruz, the no-show at the Marine headquarters standoff, attended the wedding. Cruz is one of The Firm's law partners.

* * *

WHEN Villaraza moves around, his car is followed by a convoy of bodyguards. He has reportedly no less than six bodyguards when he enters a hotel.

Why Villaraza needs to have bodyguards when his life is not in danger is beyond the comprehension of fellow lawyers.

Baka marami siyang atraso.

The question is: why has he made so many enemies?

* * *

THE FIRM is so influential it has people deployed in key government posts, including the Supreme Court and Court of Appeals.

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The Firm has the golden touch or the kiss of death, so to speak.

Oil overflow revives talks on depot relocation

By Tina G. Santos and Margaux C. Ortiz

THE GASOLINE OVERFLOW INCIDENT at the Pandacan oil depot in Manila on Thursday has strengthened the city government's stand that the oil facility should be shut down.

"We never had any talk about the oil firms staying in Pandacan. The city government's stand remains that the oil firms would have to leave the area, especially after the Thursday incident," Mayor Lito Atienza told the INQUIRER yesterday.

Gas overflowed from a storage tank of Caltex Philippines on Thursday morning, alarming residents living near the oil depot. The gasoline apparently came from a pipeline in a storage farm inside the depot.

Although depot officials said the problem was immediately contained, Atienza said he would immediately sign the ordinance changing the area's classification from industrial to commercial/residential.

The reclassification of the area under the Manila Comprehensive Land Use Plan and Zoning Ordinance of 2005 would make it unsuitable for the depot to continue operating. The ordinance was supposed to take effect in April 2003 but the oil firms have taken the matter to court. As a compromise, the oil firms signed an agreement with the city government to scale down their operations in the depot and to provide a "green buffer zone" between the oil tanks and the residential area.

However, Atienza stressed that the agreement does not supersede the ordinance which called for the facility's closure. "We're urging the oil firms to accelerate the removal of all other structures, they must vacate the area," he added.

The depot on the southern bank of the Pasig River near the Nagtahan Bridge is maintained by the country's three biggest oil firms—Petron, Caltex and Shell. It consists of large manufacturing and storage facilities for petrochemicals that are connected by pipelines to refineries in Batangas province.

Residents living near the depot appealed to the oil companies to conduct their "social responsibility programs" in the area to make up for the facility's continued presence in the city.

"The residents were alarmed at the overflowing incident on Thursday morning, but we know that it would be impossible for us to call for the immediate transfer of the depot," Domingo Seposo, chair of Barangay 836 in Pandacan, told the INQUIRER. "Apart from ensuring environmental safety, they should also conduct some of their medical missions here," he said.

Seposo said the residents acknowledged the importance of the oil depot, but stressed that they should also receive compensation for the looming dangers the facility posed like oil spills and explosions.

Seposo explained that they formed the Fence Line Community for Human Safety and Environmental Protection to conduct regular dialogues with officials of the oil companies to share their concerns.

para sa kaligtasan
OIL DEPOT
ALISIN DYAN!
Akbayan/UFO-OD

CHILDREN who live near the Pandacan oil depot call for its closure after gas overflowed from a storage tank Thursday, causing residents to panic. REM ZAMORA

Makati cops see green in new HQ

By Tarra V. Quismundo

POLICEMEN STATIONED AT THE NEWLY opened Makati Police Department headquarters will soon be seeing green.

In time for the celebration of Earth Day next month, the four-story high-tech building at the corner of Ayala Extension and Yakal Street, will be decorated with plants to liven up the interior.

The plants will come from Makati's Department of Environmental Services, at no extra expense.

Mood change

"Plants that can be seen indoors help change the mood inside. Foliage softens the look of the interiors, especially when office spaces are small," said Lydia Donato, acting chief of the DES Parks and Green Division.

Donato inspected the police headquarters the other day to check the building's greening requirements.

"Since we are giving the plants for free, the police should take care of its maintenance," said Donato.

"We will be using plants propagated in our nurseries, which also supplies ornamentals we provide to other public buildings, including barangay halls and schools," she added.

Cleanser

Apart from its aesthetic benefits, putting potted plants in enclosed premises could help counter pollutants and cleanse the air, said Donato, a botanist.

"We will put indoor plants like Chinese bamboo and fortune plants, which do not require much sunlight, in all available corners and spaces, " she added.

Donato said bigger plants in terra-cotta pots would also be placed at the building's façade.

Makati policemen moved into the P192-million headquarters early this year as the city government wanted to have its protective services facilities situated near the business center to make investors, workers and tourists feel safe.

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BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Local Government Unit of the Municipality of Manolo Fortich through its Bids and Award Committee (BAC) invites contractors registered with and classified by the Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB) to apply for eligibility to participate in the bidding for the Development/Expansion of the Manolo Fortich Water Supply System.

Prospective applicants should possess a valid PCAB license applicable to the project, must have a minimum of five (5) years experience in the construction business, have completed a similar contract with a value of at least Forty-Two Million Pesos (PhP42,000,000.00), and have expert key personnel and equipment available for the prosecution of the project. The Eligibility Check/Screening shall use the non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the Government Procurement Reform Act.

The schedule of activities is as follows:

1. Submission of Letter of Intent (LOI) : April 8-15, 2006
2. Issuance of Eligibility Forms : April 16-29, 2006
3. Submission of Eligibility Requirement : May 2, 2006
4. Notice of Results of Eligibility Check : May 3, 2006
5. Issuance of Bid Documents to Pre-Qualified Bidders : May 4-11, 2006
6. Pre-Bid Conference : May 8, 2006
7. Submission and Opening of Bids : May 24, 2006

The BAC Secretariat will issue applicant's Eligibility Forms at the Manolo Fortich, upon submission of their Letter of Intent and upon payment of non-refundable amount of Ten Thousand Pesos (PhP 10,000.00) to the Municipal Government of Manolo Fortich Cashier. Applicants shall submit their Eligibility Requirements to the BAC Secretariat and may also obtain their result at the same address.

The BAC will issue bidding documents only to bidders declared as eligible for the bidding upon payment of non-refundable amount of Ten Thousand Pesos (PhP10,000.00) to the Municipal Government of Manolo Fortich Cashier.

The Municipality of Manolo Fortich reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids at any time prior to contract award, and assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify applicants for any expenses incurred in the preparation of their bid

APPROVED:

(Sgd.) MARCELINO E. REMOTIGUE
BAC Chairman
(PDI—March 25, 2006)

INQUIRER
The Power of Knowing

The country's most widely read and circulated newspaper in the country is in need of the following:

OPERATIONS MANAGER

to manage a Distributor operation in the area of Pampanga, Bataan, Tarlac, Nueva Ecija and Zambales

QUALIFICATIONS:
- At least 25 years of age;
- College graduates with background in sales and marketing;
- At least 5 years experience in all aspects of business operations;
- Highly motivated; aggressive; hardworking;
- Must possess excellent oral and written communication skills in English, Filipino and local dialects;
- Must be based within the Pampanga area, otherwise must be willing to relocate;
- Preferably male, willing to work in a fast-paced, dynamic and flexible environment.

Send your application letter and comprehensive resume to:

GQY Distribution Group, Inc.
Penthouse, GRBank Bldg.
Dolores, San Fernando,
Pampanga

Or e-mail:
gqy_distribution@yahoo.com

Or call:
Mr. Jesse Yap at (045) 861-4676

Business angle eyed in Umale assassination

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

POLICE ARE FOCUSING THEIR INVESTIGATION on the possibility that the assassination of businessman Leonardo Umale was business-related.

In a progress report drafted a week after the murder, Task Force Umale headed by Eastern Police District director Chief Supt. Charlemagne Alejandrino listed three business conflicts which could have motivated the killing.

The three incidents included an alleged land dispute between the businessman and his "estranged brother-in-law" about three years ago; a tug-of-war over a parking lot between him and the Ynareses of Rizal; and his interests in the restaurant strip Metrowalk.

"There is reason to believe that any of the three business conflicts may have been the root cause of the untimely demise of Mr. Umale," the four-page report said.

Very petty

But the report also said that other disputes involving Umale, like those Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson had listed, needed to be looked into, even if the victim's wife, Clarissa, had described the cases as "very petty" to have motivated the killing.

Clarissa had accused Singson of masterminding the killing of her husband. But in denying the allegation, Singson listed nine cases he claimed could have motivated the murder. Clarissa had already absolved the family of Rizal Gov. Casimiro Ynares of any involvement in her husband's death.

The family instead pointed at the cases involving Metrowalk, a restaurant strip on Meralco Avenue, owned by Singson's associates.

Umale's lawyer, Agnes Maranan, said the restaurant had been placed under receivership by the court, giving Umale a chance to recover his investments in the restaurant.

Umale's first wife, Magdalena Santos, who had been separated from him for 26 years, also told the INQUIRER she believed the killing had something to do with her former husband's business interests.

Ulterior motives

"Those involved had ulterior motives. Everyone knows my husband's financial status. It is possible that motive was about money," Santos said.

Maranan told reporters Clarissa and Umale's children were "starting to feel apprehensive that we cannot get a good investigation."

She said that the police "don't seem to have done anything after a week" especially for a sensational case like Umale's.

The victim was about to enter the Pearl Plaza Building in Pasig City last week when four men shot him four times in the head.

METROBRIEFS

Protestor sues cops

A MEMBER of a militant party-list group has filed criminal charges, including arbitrary detention and less serious physical injuries, against police officials who arrested him during the dispersal of a mock beauty pageant in Quezon City early this month. Akbayan member Jessie Dimaisip, 40, yesterday filed charges against Philippine National Police chief Director General Arturo Lomibao, Metro Manila police chief Director Vidal Querol, Quezon City police director Chief Supt. Nicasio Radovan Jr. and the unidentified policemen who arrested him. In a complaint before the Quezon City prosecutor's office, Dimaisip accused the police officers of violating his rights when they arrested him during the dispersal of a mock beauty pageant at the Timog-Morato Circle on March 6. He said he was arrested on illegal assembly charges even before the group could set up their protest action in celebration of National Women's Month. Dimaisip added that the police officers told him he was being arrested for being the "leader" of the women's protest action before depositing him inside a police truck. After five minutes, he said he was transferred to a mobile van and taken to Camp Karingal. *DJ Yap*

No segregation, no collection policy

BY next month, Muntinlupa's subdivision residents should know that paper must not be mixed with plastic when throwing out the garbage. The city government has announced that waste segregation would be strictly observed in Muntinlupa's more than 80 subdivisions starting in April. "The Environment Sanitation Center (ESC)... will go full blast with its waste segregation project in all subdivisions come April or after the city ordinance on waste segregation has been amended," a statement from City Hall said. Right now, 24 villages in Muntinlupa have been practicing waste segregation in line with a local ordinance on proper garbage disposal. The city has been practicing a "No segregation, no collection" policy. Under the program, non-biodegradable trash like plastic and styrofoam would be collected on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, while biodegradable garbage, including paper and food waste, would be collected on Tuesdays and Thursdays. ESC specialist Antonio Ponciano said those found to be violating the ordinance would be meted fines and other punishment like rendering community service. *Tarra V. Quismundo*

Mandaluyong lights up

MOTORISTS passing through Martinez Street in Barangay Addition Hills, Mandaluyong City, can look forward to a safe journey after Mayor Neptali M. Gonzales II switched on 42 light posts along the kilometer-long stretch last week. With two bulbs per post every 23 meters, the total 84 lights make the street the most brightly-lit avenue in the city. The lighting of Martinez Street is one of Gonzales' priority projects to ensure the protection and safety of motorists in the city. Now that the area is well-lit, lawless elements will have no place in the area, the mayor said. Martinez Street is a major artery for motorists going to Quezon City, Manila, Pasig City, Makati City and San Juan.

Bank robbers shot dead

TWO suspected bank robbers were killed during a shootout with policemen in Manila yesterday afternoon. PO2 Joseph Kabigting of the Manila Police District Homicide Section described the first suspect as 5'4" in height and 25 to 30 years old, while the second suspect was 5'5" tall and 30 to 35 years old. Initial investigation showed that Chief Insp. Rino Corpuz of the Philippine National Police Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG) and his team were conducting surveillance in Sta. Cruz based on a tip that a group was planning to rob a commercial bank on Rizal Avenue. Corpuz and Insp. Locrego Rodriguez approached the suspects as the latter alighted from two vehicles parked at the corner of Batangas and Natividad Streets at around 1 p.m. When one of the suspects suddenly pulled out a gun, a shootout between the two groups ensued. Kabigting said the police were looking for the other suspects. *Margaux C. Ortiz*

MUNTINLUPA'S 'ULTIMATE 10' Mayor Jaime R. Fresnedi (2nd from right) confers the Jaime Fresnedi Medallion on outstanding student Paolo Chua of Paref-Southridge Day School during the 13th proclamation of the 10 Muntinlupa Outstanding Students (MOST) for this year. The annual event recognizes the city's best high school students who are given college scholarships. With Fresnedi are (from right) Councilors Raul Corro and Artemio Simundac.

Violence hits Paris anew as gov't offers talks

FRENCH President Jacques Chirac leaving EU summit in a huff. REUTERS

PARIS—VIOLENCE ERUPTED IN central Paris again Thursday as rioters took over a protest march over a controversial labor law, hurling rocks and bottles at police and lighting cars and shops ablaze.

The chaos on the Invalides esplanade, a chic central neighborhood dominated by government ministries, came as students pressed on with a fourth day of demonstrations nationwide, even as the embattled Prime Minister Dominique de Villepin gave ground by offering talks with trade unions and student groups.

Police said in the early evening that 420 people had been arrested across France Thursday, a third of them in the capital, mainly for violence, vandalism and attacks on security forces.

In Paris 141 people were arrested after gangs of masked youths hurled projectiles, smashed shop windows and set fire to cars, police said.

Bands of masked youths, who appeared not to be part of the main protest march, threw stones and metal bars at firemen called to put out a blaze in a nearby shop. Police sealed off the bridges on the nearby river Seine and lobbed tear gas canisters at the rioters.

"Violence is the only way of making yourself heard," said Baptiste, a youth from a Paris suburb observing the demonstration. "If (the government) wants to have a go at us, we'll have a go back."

Some 220,000 people, by official count, took part in the protests. Organizers said 450,000 people had participated.

Clashes also took place between police and protesters in the Mediterranean port of Marseille, the cities of Rennes, Grenoble and Lyon, and the Paris suburbs of Savigny-sur-Orge, Creteil and Rueil-Malmaison.

Sixty people were injured nationwide, including 27 police officers, according to statistics released in a statement, while one 21-year-old man was taken to hospital in Paris with serious head injuries.

Protests against the government's contested First Employment Contract (CPE) have repeatedly turned violent, but the government said the youth-dominated demonstrations and marches had been dwindling since the first major shows of force earlier this month.

The disturbances came as Villepin's government began to give first hints of conciliation in the crisis, with the premier preparing to hold open-agenda talks with the main trade unions on Friday. *AFP*

Chirac walks out of EU, makes language an issue

BRUSSELS—French President Jacques Chirac walked out of a European Union summit on Thursday after a French business leader spoke in English, adding linguistic patriotism to a row over economic nationalism.

Facing violent street protests at home over a disputed youth employment law, Chirac briefly led his delegation out of the room when the head of the EU business lobby switched from French to what he called "the language of business."

The incident, confirmed by French officials, came on top of a row over alleged protectionism by Paris, which dominated leaders' comments to the media but in typical EU fashion was not mentioned directly in the summit chamber.

Controversy over a shotgun wedding between two French energy giants brokered by Paris to stave off a potential rival Italian bid upstaged the official business of launching a common EU energy policy and agreeing measures to promote jobs and growth.

"We cannot be open for business with the rest of the world and be closed to each other," European Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso said in an indirect criticism of governments seeking to obstruct cross-border mergers in Europe.

Barroso and Austrian Chancellor Wolfgang Schuessel, who chaired the talks, insisted the summit would go down in history for the birth of a joint European strategy on energy. *Reuters*

WORLDBRIEFS

Polar melting worse than feared

WASHINGTON—Polar ice sheets are melting faster than expected and could push sea levels up as much as six meters (20 feet) by 2100, scientists warned in two studies released Thursday. Based on current warming trends, they said, average temperatures could jump "at least" four degrees Fahrenheit (2.5 degrees Centigrade) by the end of the century, resembling the last great global warming surge 129,000 years ago when seas rose that much. "This is a real eye-opener set of results," said Jonathan Overpeck of the University of Arizona, co-author of the studies with Bette Otto-Bliesner of the Boulder, Colorado National Center for Atmospheric Research (NCAR). "The last time the Arctic was significantly warmer than the present day, the Greenland Ice Sheet melted back the equivalent of two to three meters (six to 10 feet) of sea level," he said. *AFP*

Gandhi quits parliament

GANDHI REUTERS

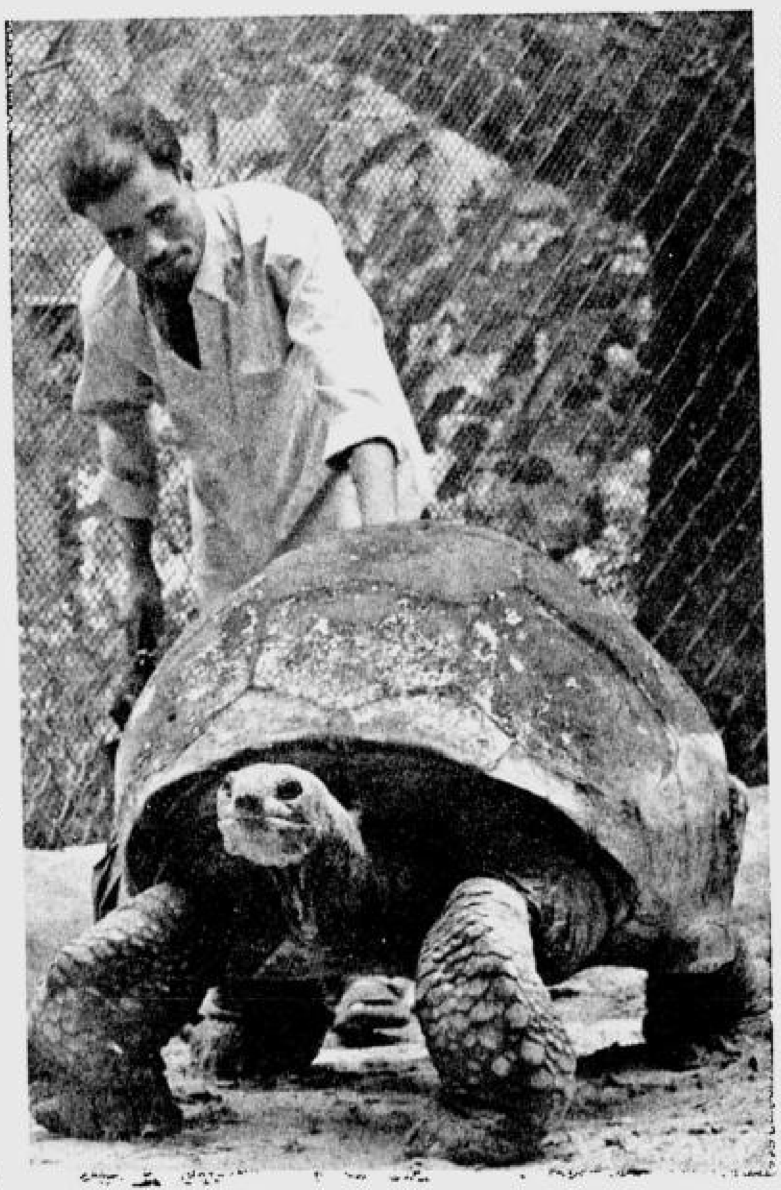
NEW DELHI—The chief of India's ruling Congress party, Sonia Gandhi, quit on Thursday as member of parliament and a key advisory body, after charges she had violated the constitution by holding both posts. But the government of Prime Minister Manmohan Singh was under no danger, analysts said, adding that the Italian-born Gandhi would likely return to parliament in six months after a fresh election. They said Gandhi had tried to preempt a campaign by the opposition Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) over the controversy and claim the moral high ground. The move was also not expected to hurt her hold over the party, they added. *Reuters*

Rumsfeld not stepping down

RUMSFELD AFP

WASHINGTON—US Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld Thursday brushed off calls for his resignation and said he had no plans to step down. "I'm hard at the job, working hard, and getting up every day and thinking what we can do for the troops and the wonderful people who serve our country," he told reporters here. The flurry of calls for Rumsfeld's resignation coincided with sinking public support for President George W. Bush after three years of war in Iraq and new fears of it turning into a full-blown civil war. Among those calling for Rumsfeld's resignation was a recently retired army general who was in charge of training Iraqi security forces in the first year after the US invasion of Iraq. Maj. Gen. Paul Eaton, in a New York Times opinion piece Sunday, said Rumsfeld had shown himself to be "incompetent strategically, operationally and tactically." Rumsfeld also was asked about a New York Times column by Maureen Dowd, who said Rumsfeld was being treated at the White House as "an eccentric uncle." *AFP*

Tortoise, believed to be 250 years old, dies in zoo



ADDWAITA, a giant Aldabra tortoise believed to be the world's oldest surviving tortoise, in June 29, 2005 photo. AP

CALCUTTA, INDIA—A GIANT TORtoise thought to be one of the world's oldest creatures has died in a Calcutta zoo, ending a life that spanned much of modern Indian history.

Local lore said Addwaita, the Aldabra tortoise whose name means "the one and only" in the local Bengali language, was some 250 years old.

That, however, would have made him much older than the world's oldest documented living animal: Harriet, a 176-year-old Galapagos tortoise who lives at the Australia Zoo north of Brisbane, according to the zoo's website. She was taken from the island of Isla Santa Cruz by Charles Darwin in the 19th century.

Calcutta zoo officials, however, insist Addwaita was far older.

"According to records in the zoo, the age of the giant tortoise, Addwaita, who died on Wednesday, would be 250 years approximately," said zoo director Subir Chowdhury.

The zoo wants to carbon date her shell to determine exactly how old she was.

Addwaita arrived in the zoo in 1875. Zoo officials say she was one of four tortoises brought to India by British sailors from the Seychelle islands as a gift for Lord Robert Clive of the East India Company. Clive was instrumental in establishing British colonial rule in India, before he returned to England in 1767.

While the other three tortoises died, Addwaita reportedly thrived, living in Clive's garden before being moved to the zoo.

Aldabra tortoises come from the Aldabra atoll in the Seychelle islands in the Indian Ocean, and often live to more than 100 years of age. Males can weigh up to 250 kg (550 lb).

According to local Forest Minister Jogesh Burman, Addwaita, the zoo's biggest attraction, had been unwell for the last few days.

"We were keeping a watch on him. When the zoo keepers went to his enclosure on Wednesday they found him dead," Burman said.

Addwaita was cremated he said. *AP*

Republic of the Philippines
NATIONAL MARITIME POLYTECHNIC
Cabalawan, Tacloban City Leyte
Tel. No. (053) 321-3356/3352

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID
PROCUREMENT OF SECURITY SERVICES

The National Maritime Polytechnic, through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the hereunder project:

Name of Project: Procurement of Security Services
Twenty (20) Security Guards rendering 8 hours at Php 8,656.41 / security guard/month duty daily

Location NMP Training Complex, Cabalawan, Tacloban City
Approved Budget for the Contract Php 2,493,045.60
Contract Duration One Year

Prospective bidders should have experience in undertaking a similar project within the last two years with an amount of at least 50% of the proposed project for bidding. The eligibility check/Screening as well as Preliminary Examination of Bids shall, use non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference, Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).

The complete schedule of activities is listed, as follows:

ACTIVITIES	SCHEDULE
1. Issuance of Bid Documents	April 3 - 7, 2006
2. Pre-bid Conference	April 10, 2006; 2:00 p.m. @ NMP Conference Room
3 Submission of Application for Eligibility & Bid Proposal	April 10 - 21, 2006
4. Opening of Bids	April 21, 2006; 9:00 a.m. @ NMP Conference Room
5 Bid Evaluation	April 21 - May 5, 2006
6 Post-qualification	May 8 - 12, 2006
7 Notice of Award	May 15, 2006

Bid documents will be available only to prospective bidders upon payment of a non-refundable amount of Php 2,500.00 to the NMP Cashier.

The NMP assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of the bid

(Sgd.) ROSITA C. BERINGUEL
BAC Chairman

(PDI—March 25 & April 1, 2006)

Exciting Opportunities for Geologist

A leading international mining company is seeking professional and committed Geologist to boost their Geological team for a major narrow vein gold development project in Compostela Valley, Mindanao.

The positions are:

ONE (1) SR. MINE GEOLOGIST
Qualifications:
1.) Licensed Geologist with at least 5 years experience working in an underground gold mine;
2.) Must have good working knowledge in grade control, underground mapping and sampling routine as practiced in an operating gold mine;
3.) Must possess good supervisory and managerial skills;
4.) Must be computer literate.

TWO (2) SR. EXPLORATION GEOLOGIST
Qualifications:
1.) Licensed Geologist;
2.) At least 5 years experience in gold and/or copper exploration;
3.) Adept in geological mapping routines, both direct plotting and GPS - and computer aided techniques;
4.) Experienced in planning and supervision of exploration diamond drilling, and experienced in drill-core logging;
5.) Possess good supervisory and managerial skills;
6.) Computer literate, preferably familiar in using AutoCad and MapInfo;
7.) Report writing ability essential.

TWO (2) JR. MINE GEOLOGIST
Qualifications:
1.) Licensed Geologist;
2.) At least 1 year experience working as underground geologist in an operatiing gold mine;
3.) Knowledge of grade control, geological mapping and sampling routine essential;
4.) Computer literate;
5.) Knowledge in the use of AutoCAD and MapInfo would be preferable.

FOUR (4) JR. GEOLOGIST
Qualifications:
1.) BS Geology graduate;
2.) Preferably licensed but new graduate may apply;
3.) Computer literate;
4.) Knowledge in the use of AutoCAD and/or MapInfo would be preferable.

The positions are site based and successful candidates will be offered a regular employment package including benefits after regularization.

Candidates who meet the criteria above and wish to be considered foe one of the positions may submit a detailed resumé including a photograph by e-mail to workexperts@skyinet.net (Work Experts & Allied Services, Inc. at Rm. 311 H&C Bldg., Alvarez St., Davao City) by 28 March 2006.

Interviews fo shortlisted candidates will take place in Metro Manila and Davao City on April 2006.

TransCo
Republic of the Philippines
National Transmission Corporation
South Luzon Operations and Maintenance

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID
Construction of Lineman's /Operator's Villa at Batangas Substation
[TRANS-06-CLVBS-EG-04]

The NATIONAL TRANSMISSION CORPORATION-SLOM, through the Internal Cash Generation (ICG) intends to apply the sum of Three Million Four Hundred Eighty Seven Thousand Four Hundred Forty Five & 82/100 (Php3,487,445.82) being the Approved Budget for Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for Construction of Lineman's/Operator's Villa at Batangas Substation. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid opening.

The NATIONAL TRANSMISSION CORPORATION-SLOM now invites potential Bidders to submit Letter of Intent (LOI) and apply for eligibility for the construction of lineman's/operator's villa at batangas substation Bidders should possess a valid PCAB license with License Particular of at least: "Category D & C, General Building" and Registration Particular of at least: "Small B-Building & Industrial Plant", must have at least completed a single contract similar to the contract to be bid involving experience in construction of all types of building, i.e housing, schools, hospitals, market, multi-storey buildings, airport terminals & other related structures The value of which should be at least 50% of the ABC, and meet the other minimum eligibility requirements stated in the eligibility documents. Applications for eligibility will be evaluated on a "pass/fail" basis The last day for submission of eligibility documents shall be on the same date of the opening of Eligibility documents: April 11, 2006, 9.00 A.M at the address mentioned in the next succeeding paragraphs. Only those Bidders passing the eligibility check will be entitled to purchase the Bidding Document. Completion of the works is required by 125 calendar days.

Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act No 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the Government Procurement Reform Act, and is restricted, unless otherwise stated, to organizations with at least seventy-five percent (75%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines. In accordance with IRR Part A of R.A 9184, only bids from Bidders who passed the eligibility check will be opened. The Bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine its responsiveness to the technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during post-qualification.

Interested Bidders shall secure the Eligibility documents from the BAC Secretariat at the address stated below, starting March 27-Apr. 10, 2006 from 8.00 A.M to 5:00 P.M. upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Php1,000.00. They shall submit their accomplished Eligibility documents on or before April 11, 2006, 9.00 A.M. at the stated address Eligibility Screening shall be held on April 11, 2006, 9.00 A. M. at the OAVP Conference Room B of the stated address.

Interested eligible Bidders may obtain further information from NATIONAL TRANSMISSION CORPORATION-SLOM Regional Contracts Management Office (RCMO) and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below from 8.00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. on April 26-28, 2006.

A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by Bidders that passed the eligibility check upon the presentation of the Notice of Eligibility to the BAC Secretariat, at the address below and upon payment of a non-refundable fee Php5,000.00. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the bidder or his authorized representative starting April 26-28, 2006, 8.00 A.M.- 5.00 P.M.

The NATIONAL TRANSMISSION CORPORATION-SLOM will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all Eligible Bidders on May 02, 2006, 9.30 A.M at the OAVP Conference Room Transco, SLOM San Vicente Biñan, Laguna

Deadline for submission of bids is on May 15, 2006, 9:30 A M at the address below All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid Security in any of the prescribed form indicated under Section 27.2 of R. A 9184 Bid opening shall be on the same date, May 15, 2006, 9:30 A.M at the OAVP Conference Room B of Transco SLOM Late Bids shall not be accepted Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend.

The NATIONAL TRANSMISSION CORPORATION-SLOM reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, and to annul the bidding process and reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

National Transmission Corporation - South Luzon Operations & Maintenance
Regional Contracts Management Office (RCMO)
San Vicente Biñan, Laguna 4024
Mr Ruben G. Castuera - BAC Chairman
(02) 981-4576 to78 local 4094, 4086, 4053
rgcastuera@transco.ph
(02) 981-4576 to 78 local 4007
www.transco.ph.

(Sgd) RUBEN G. CASTUERA
BAC Chairman
Approved for publication.
R D. RAMAS
Manager, Administration &
Head, BAC Secretariat

(PDI - March 25 & Apr 3, 2006)

The WORLD

Editor **Luverne B. Gueco**

Western hostages rescued in Baghdad

BAGHDAD—BRITISH-LED FORCES RESCUED three Christian peace activists from captivity on Thursday after finding them tied up in a house in western Baghdad, two weeks after their American colleague was tortured and killed.

The two Canadians and a Briton, seized in November, were alone in the house. No shots were fired in the operation, which was swiftly mounted after a suspect detained on Wednesday night revealed their location, a US general in Baghdad said.

News of the release emerged as a suicide car bomber blew himself up outside the headquarters of the Iraqi police's major crimes unit in Baghdad, killing 25 people and wounding 35 in one of the worst attacks on the police in recent months.

Another car bomb targeting a police patrol in a market in southwestern Baghdad killed seven people several hours later.

Nine Iraqi soldiers were also killed when a suicide bomber hit their patrol near the Al Asad US air base in western Iraq, interior ministry sources said.

The violence has underlined increasingly urgent calls by Washington for politicians to end a deadlock that has stalled formation of a unity government three months after elections.

Officials said party leaders would gather on Saturday after a break for holidays of several days to resume high-level negotiations. Lower-level talks may take place on Friday.

Parliament, however, is unlikely to meet until next month.

"It's great to be free," Briton Norman Kember, 74, said after British and other forces freed him and Canadian fellow-hostages Jim Loney, 41, and Harmeet Sooden, 32.

The tortured body of another activist, American Tom Fox, was found dumped in the capital two weeks ago.

A British Embassy official said the three men were in "good shape" in the embassy. Kember was "happy and relaxing."

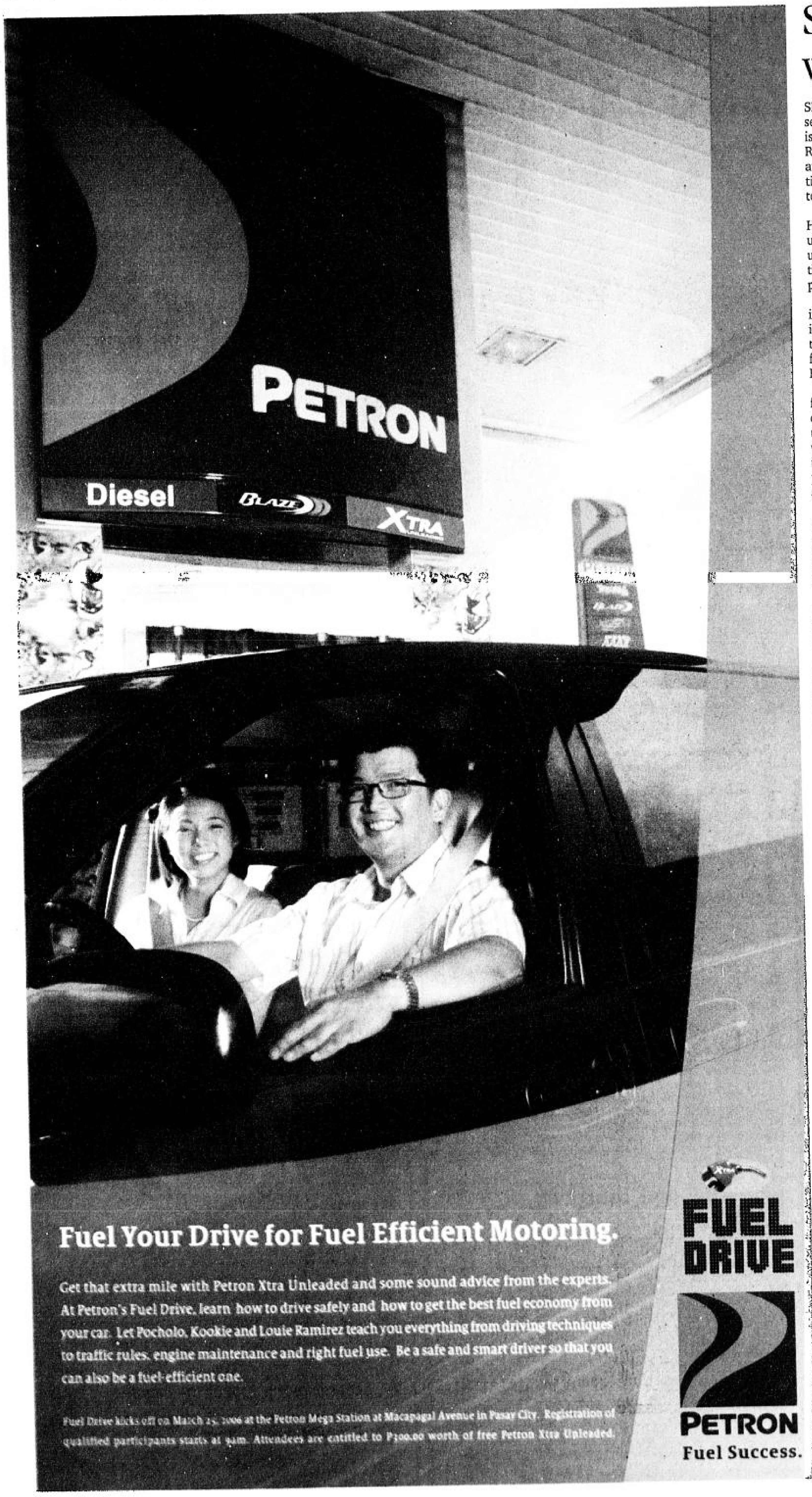
US military spokesperson Maj. Gen. Rick Lynch said two people had been detained during an operation on Wednesday night, one of whom gave crucial information that led to the raid being mounted at 8 a.m.

"It was three hours between when we got the information and when we released the hostages," Lynch said.

The men were found in a room in a house in west Baghdad, a Sunni insurgent stronghold. There was no sign of their captors.

Lynch said they appeared to be victims of a "kidnapping cell that has been robust over the past several months."

A British military spokesperson, Wing Commander Tony Radcliffe, said the trio's release was part of "an ongoing operation related to hostages." *Reuters*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Fuel Your Drive for Fuel Efficient Motoring.

Get that extra mile with Petron Xtra Unleaded and some sound advice from the experts. At Petron's Fuel Drive, learn how to drive safely and how to get the best fuel economy from your car. Let Pocholo, Kookie and Louie Ramirez teach you everything from driving techniques to traffic rules, engine maintenance and right fuel use. Be a safe and smart driver so that you can also be a fuel-efficient one.

Fuel Drive kicks off on March 25, 2006 at the Petron Mega Station at Macapagal Avenue in Pasay City. Registration of qualified participants starts at 9am. Attendees are entitled to P300.00 worth of free Petron Xtra Unleaded.

FUEL DRIVE
PETRON
Fuel Success.

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South Korea gets first woman prime minister

HAN REUTERS

SEOUL—SOUTH KOREA WAS set for its first woman prime minister on Friday after President Roh Moo-hyun named lawmaker and former jailed democracy activist to succeed a veteran legislator who quit over a golfing gaffe.

If approved by parliament, Han Myeong-sook is expected to use her moderate image to patch up a stormy relationship between the government and opposition parties ahead of local elections.

"President Roh expects the nominee, Han, will carry out major policy goals stably and progressively through her soft leadership and a forceful administrative drive," the Blue House said in a statement.

Han, 61, would replace powerful veteran legislator Lee Hae-chan, a five-term member of the unicameral National Assembly who quit over criticism for playing golf with businessmen on a public holiday while a railway strike caused transport chaos.

Han's image as a moderate and a relative absence of expected disapproval from opposition parties played highly in Roh's decision to nominate her, a Blue House official said.

Lee's two years in office were marked by bitter political clashes with the opposition, which called him arrogant.

South Korean prime ministers are usually figureheads under strong presidents, although Roh gave Lee sweeping power on domestic policy. It was not clear whether Han would command similar authority.

The main opposition Grand National Party rated highly Han's work in civil society and in parliament, but said she must now give up her membership in the ruling Uri Party to ensure her and the government's neutrality in the upcoming local elections.

Voters will pick governors, mayors and county officers throughout the country in the May 31 elections.

Born in Pyongyang in 1944 before the Korean War, Han spent much of her career in women's and environmental movements and served a prison term between 1979 and 1981 pushing for democracy under the authoritarian rule of Chun Doo-hwan.

The former feminist leader was the first minister for gender equality when the post was created in 2001 and was later environment minister.

Under South Korean law, parliament must hold a confirmation hearing within 15 days of receiving a presidential request and vote on the nomination within 20 days. *Reuters*

Thaksin-founded mobile firm hurting from boycott

THAKSIN AFP

BANGKOK—THAILAND'S TOP mobile operator, Advanced Info Service (AIS), said Friday it was feeling the pain of a boycott called by opponents of embattled Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra.

AIS, the flagship unit of telecoms giant Shin Corp., which was founded by Thaksin, said subscribers ,were canceling its services because of the company's link with the premier.

"Some customers canceled our products. When we asked them why, they said they were canceling because of Thaksin. We accepted their opinions and we have to be patient," said an AIS official who declined to be named.

"This political crisis was starting to affect us negatively. It has affected our morale," she said. She declined to give the number of cancellations but added the company would release such figures in May.

Thaksin, under allegations of abuse of power and corruption, has faced near daily demonstrations demanding his resignation. Anti-Thaksin groups will again hold another mass protest in Bangkok on Saturday.

Opponents of Thaksin have also called for a boycott of companies linked to Thaksin, his friends and supporters, and Singapore's state-linked investment firm Temasek, which now owns more than 96-percent stake in Shin Corp.

Simmering criticism of Thaksin's autocratic style exploded in late January, when his family earned $1.9 billion by selling its 50-percent stake in Shin Corp. to Temasek without having to pay tax.

After buying the stake from Thaksin's family, Temasek launched a mandatory tender offer and bought an additional 46.91 percent of Shin Corp.

Separately, Temasek made a mandatory tender offer to buy AIS, which controls over 50 percent of the Thai cell phone market with 16.3 million users.

The tender offer for AIS ended on Tuesday and Temasek was expected to announce its details by March 28.

Temasek-owned Shin Corp. has a 43-percent stake in AIS while Temasek-controlled Singapore Telecommunications (SingTel) holds a 19-percent stake in the mobile phone unit. The rest is owned by individual investors. *AFP*

SPORTS

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BAP sec gen arrested, detained

Lim to be deported to Taiwan as soon as agencies clear him of pending cases

By Leila B. Salaverria

MONTHS AFTER HE WAS ORDERED EXPELLED FROM THE country, Basketball Association of the Philippines secretary general Graham Lim was arrested yesterday in his Manila office by Bureau of Immigration agents who had been staking out the area.

Lim, who was earlier ordered deported for misrepresenting himself as a Filipino, was brought briefly to the BI office in Intramuros after his arrest at the BAP office at the Rizal Memorial Sports Complex. He was later transferred to the bureau's detention center in Bicutan, Taguig.

BI intelligence chief Faizal Hussin said Lim did not resist arrest when confronted by immigration operatives, who were armed with a warrant of deportation issued by BI commissioner Alipio Fernandez, Jr. Lim had maintained that he is a Filipino, Hussin added.

Hussin also said that the BI operatives had searched for Lim for over two months, but the latter had proved elusive.

Lim would be deported to Taiwan as soon as the bureau is through getting the clearance from various government agencies stating that Lim has no pending cases, said Hussin.

"If there are pending cases against him, he can't be deported unless these are resolved," the intelligence chief said in an interview.

Hussin also said that generally, the BI could not grant bail to aliens if its Board of Commissioners had already issued a deportation order.

However, the immigration commissioner also has the discretion to grant bail to detainees, Hussin added.

Restraining order

BI special prosecutor Arvin Santos said only a restraining order from the Court of Appeals could stop the bureau from expelling the basketball official from the country. He added that Lim has a pending application for certiorari and for the issuance of a temporary restraining order on his deportation before the CA.

The BI Board of Commissioners earlier ruled that Lim is a citizen of the Republic of China (Taiwan). It said Lim violated immigration law by misrepresenting himself as a Filipino and using a Philippine passport.

Among the evidence the bureau took into account in issuing the decision was Lim's petitions for naturalization before a Manila Regional Trial Court and the Office of the Solicitor General, his Taiwanese passport, his alien certificate of registration and his birth and marriage certificates.

BAP secretary general Graham Lim in his Camp Bagong Diwa detention cell. RODEL ROTONI

Lim appealed the decision before the legal department of the Office of the President, which twice denied his motion. Malacañang denied his appeal with finality on Nov. 9 last year.

Lim earlier claimed that he is a Filipino citizen. He alleged, among other things, having been born and raised here in the Philippines.

He said that, based on the Treaty of Paris, which declared all inhabitants of the country as Filipinos, his ancestors are Filipinos as well.

The Malacañang resolution dismissing Lim's appeal stated that the BAP official—whose questionable control of the national basketball agency had caused grave shame for the country in international tournaments—failed to submit evidence to prove that his ancestors had been residents of the Philippines when the treaty was signed.

The resolution also stated that, even if Lim was born in the Philippines, that does not automatically make him a Filipino since the country operates under the doctrine of *jus sanguinis*, wherein a person follows the citizenship of his parents.

Lim says POC behind his arrest

By Jasmine W. Payo

BASKETBALL ASSOciation of the Philippines secretary general Graham Lim accused the Philippine Olympic Committee of masterminding his arrest and detention yesterday at the Camp Bagong Diwa in Bicutan, Parañaque.

"The POC is behind

LIM/ A22

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Focus on Magnolia, Viloria in PBL opener

GAMES TODAY (*San Andres Gym*)
1 p.m.—Opening ceremony
2 p.m.—Montana vs TeleTech
4 p.m.—Magnolia vs Granny Goose

TO STAY FIRMLY FOCUSED, NOW THAT most of the wards will be crossing over to the pros at the end of the conference, will be the main challenge for the Magnolia Spinners in the PBL Unity Cup.

"The only emphasis I can give to the team is teamwork," said Magnolia Koy Banal. "Since many of the players are turning pro, they might play individually."

The Spinners will kick off their campaign for a second straight title against Granny Goose Tortillos at 4 p.m.

The Montaña Jewels and league newcomer TeleTech Titans will clash in the 2 p.m. opener, right after the the opening ceremony at 1 p.m.

World boxing champion Brian Viloria will be the guest of honor, while the Rivermaya band will also grace the event.

Banal will still be sticking to his tested roster led by Arwind Santos and Kelly Williams.

"There's a saying why fix it when it's not broken," said Banal. "Maybe later, if something happens, when we're no longer in the right track, then we'll adjust our lineup."

Magnolia bagged the Heroes Cup title recently behind Williams, who averaged 12.6 points and 11.4 rebounds in the series, and Santos, who normed 11.4 points and 9.4 boards.

Jerry Codiñera, named among the 25 all-time best PBA players, will debut as head coach along with rookie squad TeleTech.

"We've put up a competitive lineup, so we're ready," said Codiñera. *Jasmine W. Payo*

Aces run Pals' defense through the shredder

GAME TODAY (*Urdaneta Sports & Cultural Center*)
4:30 p.m.—San Miguel Beer vs Red Bull
GAMES TOMORROW (*Araneta Coliseum*)
4:10 p.m.—Purefoods vs Alaska
6:30 p.m.—Talk N Text vs Coca-Cola

By June Navarro

ALASKA POUNCED ON TALK 'N TEXT'S TESTY transformation into a defense-oriented team and carved out a methodical 86-79 victory last night in the Gran Matador Brandy-PBA Philippine Cup at the Cuneta Astrodome.

Mike Cortez exposed the holes of that metamorphosis by drilling in crucial baskets from afar, capped by back-to-back triples that helped the Aces to their third win in five games.

"Any time you do something new, it will definitely take time," said Alaska coach Tim Cone, referring to the Phone Pals' departure from their usual offensive-minded formula.

"It's easier to take over a team and continue the system than overhauling the entire approach, which coach Derrick (Pumaren) has been doing."

Pumaren took the helm at Talk 'N Text, replacing Joel Banal, at the start of the conference and brought in a defensive philosophy that had made great strides in the league in the mid-1990s.

The two-time champion coach led Swift to a near Grand Slam in 1995 with a system built on defense.

"We've faced each other many times in the past and it's always a defensive battle against

ACES/ A22-23

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S'pore squad vying in DHL golf

AN EIGHT-MAN SINgapore squad is seeing action in the DHL-WWWExpress National Amateur Golf Championships firing off on Tuesday at Cangolf's north course.

Jonathan Leong and three other members of the squad that placed second to RP in the last Southeast Asian Games are in the fold.

The others are Choo Tze Huang, Goh Kun Yang and Quincy Quek.

Expected to lead the local challenge in the four-day championship sponsored by DHL and WWWExpress are Cangolf mainstays Jay Bayron, Boyet Saragoza, Ronnie Torrecampo, JR Tanpinco and 2004 champion Jun Bernis.

Keen competition is also seen in the girls' side with reigning RP Ladies champion Debbie de Villa leading the chase for the title.

Meanwhile, registration ends at 12 noon today. For inquiries, call NGAP at 525-6987 or 524-5160.

Oliva-Meroy pair tops Jaguar/Land Rover Invt'l

SEVERINO OLIVA AND Francisco Meroy carded 50 points to rule the Jaguar/ Land Rover Golf Invitational last March 15-17 at the Sta. Elena Golf Club. The Oliva-Meroy tandem bested 18 other pairs and earned the right to represent Jaguar Philippines in the exclusive Jaguar World Golf Tournament in Gleneagles, Scotland in June. Oliva and Meroy will fly to Scotland and back via Air France-KLM. The team of Rudy Fulo and Isagani Buenaflor scored 48 points and settled for second place, winning by countback in the last three holes over the pair of Nancy Co and Pol Puente. Now on its seventh year, the Jaguar/Land Rover Golf Invitational brings together owners of Jaguar and Land Rover, and special guests. Jaguar Phils. was again joined by its long-time partners, including Petron Corp. Air France-KLM (the official carrier), Exo-Armoring, MAA General Assurance Philippines, Lucerne, Lacoste, MOL Philippines, Hotel Intercontinental, DHL-WWW Express, Citigold Wealth Management, Amanpulo Resorts, Callaway Golf, El Nido Resorts, Ideal Vision Center, Johnny Walker, Clarins, Loewe fragrances and Pisanti, as well as Unilever, Coca-cola and Bose.

Scooters strike back

SCOOT66 AND EUROscoot, two of the most prominent European scooter clubs in the country, collide in the first European Scooter Club Track Day tomorrow at the Carmona Circuit Philippines in Carmona, Cavite. Members of both clubs clash in both the geared and automatic categories of the event dubbed as the 2006 Scooter Wars. The race is sponsored by Facom tools and equipment, Alessandra Racing, Inc., Bosch Automotive, Euro Motors Corp., Kainan sa Dalampasigan, Sunbolt Sports Drink, Stoplight TV, Inside Racing, Scooterista Magazine and REV Magazine. Co-favorites Alfie Lim and Clifford Certeza are set to renew their personal rivalry for the right to be called "King of the Scooters."

How Monico kept us all spellbound

IN HUDDLE

Beth Celis

I'VE KNOWN BACOLOD REP. MONICO Puentevella for years, but it took a concert at Merk's Bistro for me to become his fan.

Until last Monday night, I didn't know he could sing. Or that he was a "Tawag ng Tanghalan" champion decades ago.

Monico, also the first vice president of the Philippine Olympic Committee, arrived late at Merk's for the fundraising concert for mediamen Bert Cuevas and Butch Maniego, both seriously afflicted with diabetes.

When he learned that he was going to be asked to sing, Monico, attempting to escape, crept towards the exit.

He almost made it, but an eagle-eyed Richard Merk caught him dead on his tracks and dragged him back inside.

* * *

Monico regaled the audience with three songs. We were all spellbound. He's really good. He sang Louie Armstrong's "What a Wonderful World," "You'll Never Walk Alone," and another popular ditty whose title I can't recall. No one could. Everyone must have been soused.

Richard said Monico was unbeaten as "Tawag ng Tanghalan" champion for months until superstar Nora Aunor unseated him.

Frankly, I like Monico's voice and style better than the legendary Aunor. I still have to double-check, though, if it was really Nora Aunor who had unseated Monico.

Like the congressman, I also arrived late at Merk's, having just flown in from Hong Kong that day, where the Talk 'N Text-Purefoods game was held over the weekend.

I was lucky to catch Monico, Dingdong Eduque's Route 70 (Dingdong is the son of the late Tito Eduque, local basketball's legendary coach), and The Dream Kitchen band featuring Philippine Tribune sports editor Aldrin Cardona on the lead guitar.

* * *

Which reminds me. I failed to mention in my last column that Talk 'N Text's top honcho Manny V. Pangilinan never made it to Hong Kong for the game. We were told that something really important kept him in Manila.

While the game was ongoing, PLDT legal counsel Paul Gueco kept him updated via the cellphone. MVP awaited the final outcome with bated breath.

Anyway, for Ricky Vargas, the food never tasted better at the Springdeer restaurant where he treated the media group to dinner later that night.

On the way back to our hotel where we traveled on foot, Ricky stopped in front of a Giordano store and, on impulse, invited us in. If his team was rewarded with a won-game bonus for the win that day, he said his guests also deserved a won-game gift of Giordano pants.

Meanwhile, an ecstatic MVP declared a double victory. We never did find out what the other victory was all about, but we assumed it must be another big business coup.

Lim says
his arres

From page A21

this ever since, these people have no conscience," said Lim. "Everybody is after my deportation because of my position. But I was elected in my association."

Wearing an orange shirt and khaki pants, Lim was detained with nine other foreigners in one cell with no electricity. Visibly stressed, he questioned the legality of his arrest.

"My
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Lim

Aces run Pals' defe

him," said Cone. "But give Derrick some time and he will make Talk 'N Text a formidable [team]."

Nic Belasco's three-point shooting also made life hard for the Phone Pals.

Belasco made fo
had a double-dou
with 26 points and
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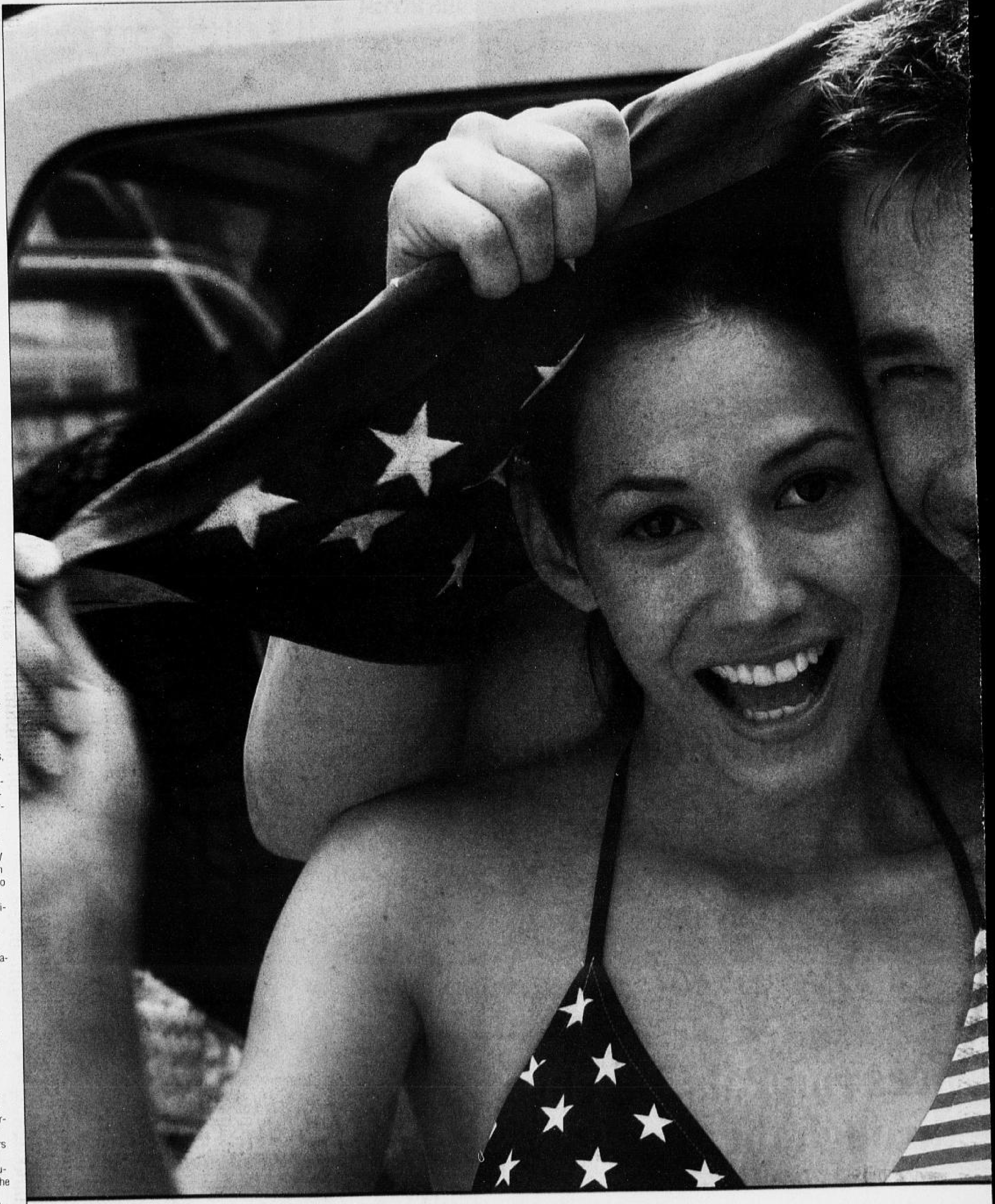
carved out a 109-9



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POC behind t, detention

ase is being studied in the Court of that's why I'm surprised why they arrant of arrest while my case is still ," said Lim. "I have been expecting e last three months because there ople who have been telling me to w profile because they're already g my warrant of arrest."

aintained that the citizenship case was a result of a power struggle in the BAP.

BAP is also fighting to regain its membership in the local Olympic body. Last year, the international basketball federation (Fiba) suspended the Philippines from competing in international tournaments. The sanction came when the POC expelled BAP for alleged poor management of the RP team.

Lim will post a P55,000 bail on Monday.

nse through the shedder

From page A21

a treys and le, finishing 0 rebounds. ame. Air21 victory over Ginebra behind the fourth-quarter heroics of Renren Ritualo, who played through a sprained ankle.

The scores:

First Game

ALASKA 86—Belasco 26, Cortez 20, Dela Cruz 17, Allado 9, Cariaso 6, Thoss 2, Wilson 2, Hugnatan 2, Laure 2, Bajar 0.

TALK 'N TEXT 79—Ferriols 16, Cardona 15, Taulava 11, Miller 10, Alapag 9, Juinio 7, Carey 6, Avenido 5, Meneses 0.

Quarters: 18-15, 42-38, 68-63, 86-79.

RP captures gold in world muay tilt

TEAM PHILIPPINES, BANNERED by freshly minted Southeast Asian Games champions, yesterday captured its first gold medal in the third World Muay Thai Championships in Bangkok, Thailand.

Composed of George Lusadan, Jessica Oyang and Emmanuel Sabrine, the RP kickers defeated the Lebanon team to take the aerobics muay thai title. Host Thailand clinched the bronze.

The RP squad also snared the bronze in the Wai Kru and Muayboran in a tie with Iran. Germany bagged the gold after beating Kuwait.

About 500 athletes from 50 countries are vying in the tournament.

Lusadan won the SEAG gold last year, while Ong was the national flyweight champion from 2003 to 2005 and bronze winner in the 2003 Thailand Queen's Cup. Both of them are from World Muay Thai Federation-Philippines.

Sabrine, on the other hand, belongs to Metro Manila's Chinese Kickboxing Team.

The RP team also gained a sure medal when Sabrine and another SEAG gold winner, Rolando Claro, arranged a duel for the flyweight bronze medal match slated today.

Making up the bronze-winning team were Billy Alumno and Sonny Sumales.

The WMF-Phils Motolite-Pagcor team sent five players to compete in Bangkok and Patumthanee led by coach Brico Santig, while the MAP national team fielded five led by Roberto Valdez. *Marc Anthony Reyes*

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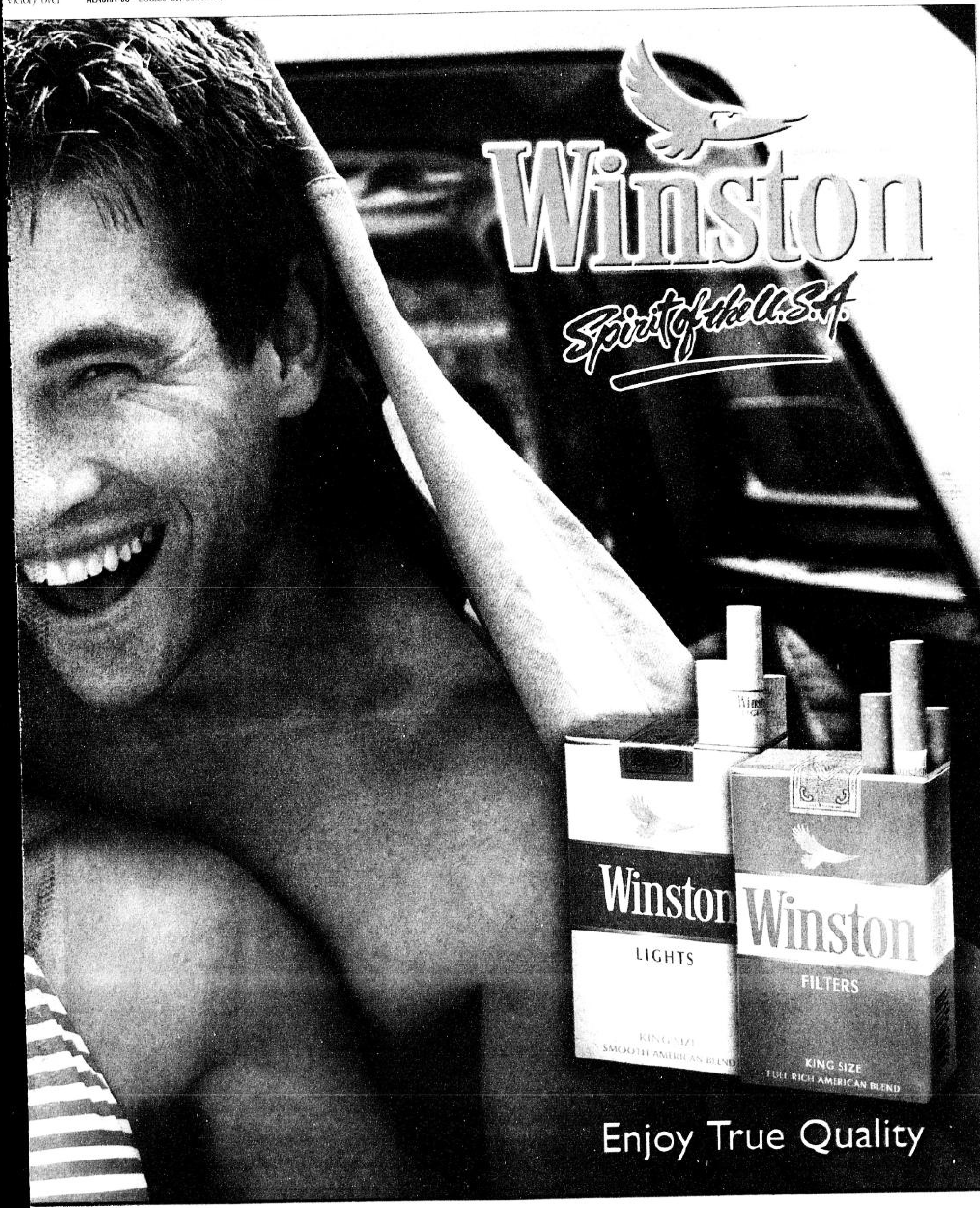
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SPORTS WATCH

LSGH hoops camp slated

THE LA SALLE GREEN Hills Summer Basketball Camp kicks off on April 3. The program is designed for elementary and high school students aged 7 to 17. Non-La Sallians are welcome to join. Two modules consisting of eight sessions each will be offered. The first module starts on April 3 and ends on April 28 while the second is from May 1-17. Sessions will be held from 1 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. Registration fee is P2,000 inclusive of a reversible jersey. For inquiries, call 722-7717 or 721-2000.

LPC cockfest finals today

THE CHAMPIONSHIP round of the "Pamigay Premyo" 3-cock derby begins at 7 p.m. today featuring 60 explosive matches at the Las Piñas Coliseum. Aside from the 26 qualifiers from Thursday's elimination round, 15 more participants will join the battle for prizes totaling P150,000 tonight, said coliseum manager Alex Tobias. Meanwhile, a bonus of P20,000 await the first 20 winners of LPC's regular hackfight schedule from Monday to Sunday. For inquiries, call 873-1040 or 874-3910.

Jobo 5-cock tilt Monday

DERBY CHAMPIONS figure in a grand battle when the Jobo 5-Cock Derby kicks off on Monday at the Makati Coliseum with B-Meg Derby Ace as sponsor. Host Lito Orillaza, one of WTJ Sports and Amusement Corp.'s top honchos, said the cash pot is P1 million. A significant number of the cockersportsmen are competing at the venue for the first time, among them Mayor Eddie Alarilla, Max Roxas, Pepe Tan of Davao, Boy Royo, Rep. Baby Asistio, Dean Joson, Mayor Lazatin, Obet Son, Rep. Lawrence Wacnang, Mike Buendia and Jorge "Nene" Araneta. For inquiries, call 896-3545 or 895-6475.

RACING TIPS

BY TOP CHOICE

Race 1—(Dri/Tri)—Vivere (7), Money Man (1), D As Dive (6), Wind Runner (4)
Race 2—(Dri/Tri)—Clear Stone (6), Pamanan Mesan (4), Crystal City (1), War Bed (2)
Race 3—(Dri/Tri)—Jones Only (4), Batang Kalookan (6), Mano Po (1), American Idol (7)
Race 4—(Penta/Dri/Tri)—Golden Majestic (9), Batang Ganda (5), Summer Rain (2), Rich and Famous (3), Terry Toon/Iron Tower (8)
Race 5—(Dri/Tri)—Friendly Venture (6), Gemstone (1), Top Of U'Line (4), Joint Account (2)
Race 6—(Penta/Dri/Tri)—Leading Man (8), Samahan (6), Gentleman's Lady (4), Run Docking Fly (5), Epic Energy (9)
Race 7—(Tri)—High Octane (4), Belim Belim (5), Sir Brendan Jean (1)
Race 8—(Dri/Tri)—Czarevia (6), Step On The Gas (3), Speed Bullet (5), Bunker Buster (7), Shining Lance (9)
Race 10—(Dri/Tri)—Collective Dreams (7), Eden's Quest (6), Playing Cool (8), Rose and Roy (7)
Race 11—(Penta/Dri/Tri)—Anytime Anywhere (3), Hezabellagio (8), Seeing Red (9), Magic Dancer (2), Silver Cho Cho (1)
Race 12—(Dri/Tri)—Star Emblem/Modern Classic (1), Fair Unduqa (2), Heart of Jonna (3), Ravishing Rafty (5)
Race 13—(Super 6/Dri/Tri)—All Powerful/Na's A Dalong (5), Mesmerized (6), Royal Rose (4), Skip Away (3), Silver/Music (1), Hale and Hearty (9)

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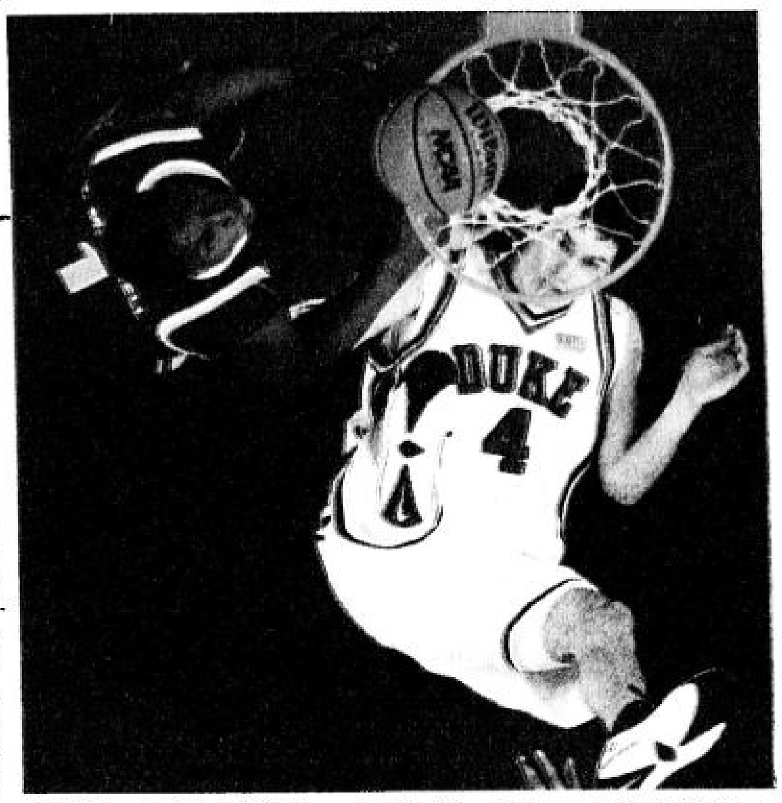
SPORTS



LSU's Tasmin Mitchell (left) sends JJ Redick and Duke tumbling down. AP

PLAYERS CHAMPIONSHIP

Love shares dinner, lead

PONTE VEDRA BEACH, Florida—Davis Love III steered clear of trouble on the TPC at Sawgrass with seven birdies inside 10 feet for a 7-under 65 Thursday, earning him a share of the first-round lead at the Players Championship with dinner partner Jim Furyk.

As Love navigated his way around the Stadium Course without a bogey in the morning, attention shifted to the parking lot when Woods showed up after a cross-country trip to California to visit his 74-year-old father, Earl Woods, who is battling cancer. Woods left Tuesday night not knowing if he would come back.

"He's fighting as hard as he can," Woods said.

Woods returned about 12 hours before his tee time, and his play was sporadic—five birdies, five bogeys and a 72 that left him seven shots behind.

Sawgrass was relatively tame without much wind and the occasional drizzle that softened the greens, and it showed in a series of good scores and a bunched leaderboard.

Bernhard Langer continued his mastery of the island-green 17th, the most terrifying par 3 in golf, with his 20th career birdie that carried him to a 67, along with Robert Allenby and Miguel Angel Jimenez. Vijay Singh was bogey-free in his round of 68 that left him tied with a group that included Jose Maria Olazabal, Ben Crane and Pebble Beach winner Arron Oberholser.

"The course is there," Love said. "If you hit it in the fairways and putted, you're going to do well."

Furyk, who invited Love to dinner Wednesday night at his home nearby along with Brad Faxon (70), Phil Mickelson (70) and Justin Leonard (75), opened with seven pars before hitting a hybrid club into 20 feet on the 219-yard eighth hole and making birdie.

Mickelson had five birdies, but put his tee shot in the water at 15 for bogey, did the same on 17 for double bogey and wound up with a 70.

"Maybe Phil didn't eat enough," Love said. *AP*

Suns shine on Stoudemire return

RICHARDSON AP

PHOENIX—AMARE STOUDEMIRE CELebrated his return to the Phoenix lineup by scoring a team-high 20 points to lead the Suns to a 125-108 home romp over the Portland Trail Blazers on Thursday.

Sidelined since the start of the season following knee surgery, Stoudemire's long-awaited first appearance of the campaign provided Phoenix with his expected spark as the Suns racked up 76 first half points, the most by any team this season.

Looking fit and eager to play, Stoudemire received a standing ovation from the crowd and scored 20 points and nine rebounds in 19 minutes.

In East Rutherford, Vince Carter bagged 21 points, grabbed seven rebounds and dished out seven assists to lead the New Jersey Nets past the Minnesota Timberwolves, 86-82, extending their winning streak to seven games.

In Dallas, Jason Richardson scored 40 points, including a game-winning three-pointer at the buzzer, to give the Golden State Warriors a 122-121 win over the Mavericks.

The win overshadowed a brilliant 51-point performance from Dirk Nowitzki, just two shy of his career high.

In Salt Lake City, Gilbert Arenas scored 31 points, and the Washington Wizards spoiled Karl Malone's retirement night with a 109-97 victory over the Utah Jazz.

The Jazz retired Malone's No. 32 during a halftime ceremony and unveiled a bronze statue of the "Mailman" before the game. *Reuters*

- **NBA on TV:**

SOLAR SPORTS—Memphis vs New York (8:30 a.m. live, 7 p.m. replay)

ESPN—Milwaukee vs LA Lakers (11:30 a.m. live, 9:30 p.m. replay)

Pacquiao, Viloria highlight Elorde awards

PEOPLE'S CHAMPION MANNY PACquiao and World Boxing Council flyweight champion Brian Villoria will lead international and Philippine champions who will be honored during the Gabriel "Flash" Elorde Memorial Awards tonight at the ballroom of the Dusit Hotel Nikko in Makati.

Pacquiao will be honored as the "Boxer of the Year" while Viloria will receive the Flash Elorde Golden Belt in ceremonies coinciding with the 71st birth anniversary of the boxer.

Pacquiao will also receive an 18-carat gold ring to be given by the Elorde family.

Others major awardees are Rodel Mayol, Rey "Boom Boom" Bautista, Czar Amonsot, Randy Suico, Dindo Castanares and Rev Santillan.

The event will start at 6 p.m. and is sponsored by Pagcor and the PCSO.

Tigers give Redick, Blue Devils hell

ATLANTA—LOUISIANA STATE UNIversity used an aggressive defense to beat top seed Duke 62-54 in the last 16 of the NCAA Tournament in Atlanta, Georgia, on Thursday.

The fourth-seeded Tigers limited Duke's top scorer JJ Redick to 11 points, blocked nine shots and held the Blue Devils to their worst shooting performance of the season with 27.7 percent.

"Defensively and in terms of rebounding the ball, it was as fine an effort as I have ever had a team play," LSU coach John Brady said.

LSU defeated Duke by effectively clamping down on Redick, one of the nation's top players. The senior guard connected on only 3 of 18 from the floor and finished 17 points below his average.

"We knew we had to not let JJ Redick get in a rhythm of offense and we were going to double-team," Brady said. "Garrett Temple did a wonderful job (on defense), but our other players did a wonderful job of carrying out the plan."

Darrell Mitchell and Glen "Big Baby" Davis each scored 14 points for LSU (26-8). Tyrus Thomas added 15 rebounds and blocked five shots.

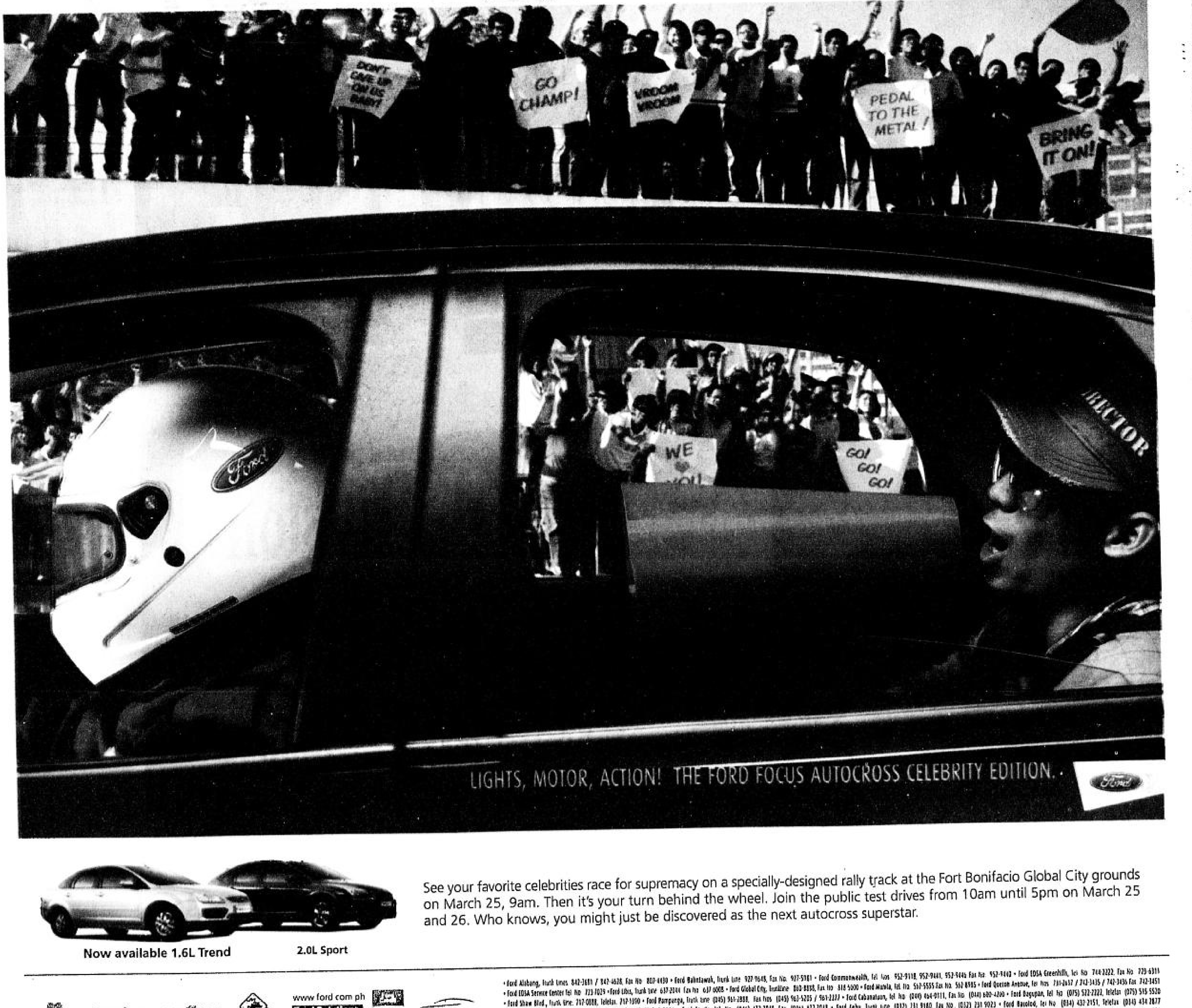
Shelden Williams topped Duke (32-4) with 23 points and 11 rebounds.

In other games, Kenton Paulino's three-pointer at the buzzer gave Texas (30-6) a 74-71 victory over West Virginia (22-11), UCLA scored the game's final 11 points to edge Gonzaga, 73-71, and Memphis cruised past Bradley, 80-64.

Cameroon's Luc Richard Mbah a Moute's layup with 10 seconds to put UCLA ahead and Arron Afflalo clinched the win for the second-seeded Bruins with a free throw with two seconds left.

Gonzaga led 71-62 with 3:26 left in the game before UCLA (30-6) staged its comeback.

Jordan Farmar and Afflalo each had 15 points for UCLA. *Reuters*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SATURDAY Special

Editor **Nestor U. Torre** • Assistant Editor **Rito P. Asilo**

LUCAS AND LUKE. Predictable sports movie that works.

Earnest basketball flick soars and scores

By Noelani Torre

A PASSIONATE COACH, AN underdog team, unbeatable defending champions, and an adrenaline-charged showdown—these are elements present in every sports movie made, and the Jerry Bruckheimer-produced "Glory Road" is no exception.

Based on a true story and directed by James Gartner, "Glory Road" predictably adheres to formula—but that isn't necessarily a bad thing. After all, this feel-good recipe is the *raison d'être* of many sports flicks.

Underdogs

Audiences want to go home with the warm, fuzzy feeling that you get from watching underdogs triumph.

"Glory Road" tells the story of the Texas Western basketball team, who won the 1966 NCAA tournament title from the heretofore undefeated University of Kentucky Wildcats.

Dubbed one of the most important upsets in history, it is significant not only because of its Cinderella slant, but also because of the fact that the Texas Western Miner's entire starting lineup was, for the first time in history, composed of African-American players.

Not welcome

Led by coach Don Haskins (Josh Lucas), the Miners had an unprecedented successful season in 1965-66, due largely to the talents of their black recruits led by Bobby Joe Hill (Derek Luke). At the time, black players were not welcome on basketball courts of the South.

Haskins is passionate—he is out to win. Working for a small, unknown school with no budget, he realizes that he can't recruit from the usual white sources.

Overlooked

He sets his sights on traditionally overlooked black players and those who had only played in the streets.

This move is not approved by the powers that be. But, when then the team starts winning, thnigs begin to change.

Yes, the movie is pretty predictable, but at the end of the day, what's important is that it works. Ultimately, the earnestness of the production is its saving grace.

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Authentic Japanese cuisine at Dusit Hotel

BENKAY JAPANESE RESTAURANT is Manila's favorite Japanese restaurant serving a wide selection of Japanese dishes made from only the best and freshest ingredients from Japan. Throughout the years, Benkay has been celebrated for its well-loved and authentic Japanese cuisine by food connoisseurs and has created a loyal following both locally and internationally. Benkay, by far, is the only Japanese restaurant in Manila frequented by Japanese nationals longing for authenticity.

With this, Benkay features this summer the 'Peach Seasonal Festival' (Mamo No Setsuki). This sumptuous set-menu is composed of an appetizer, sliced raw fish, soup and dessert and is priced at only P1,800++ per person, for the ultimate in Japanese gastronomy.

For a true feel of Japanese dining, Benkay's interiors are kept simple, accented by a serene view of the Japanese garden outside. The restaurant has a section of three misono tables, separated by glass panels with fluid stroke etching designs. Smaller private tatami-style rooms are also available for parties of 8 people to a group of 26. A sushi counter completes the room layout.

Benkay-Authentic Japanese Cuisine is located at the ground floor of Dusit Hotel Nikko. For inquiries, please dial 867-3333 extension 3343. Advance dining reservation is advised.

COFFEE IN A CAKE AT THE BELLEVUE HOTEL

Coffee and cake lovers celebrate for Efendi, The Bellevue Hotel's cake of the month. Savor the exceptional taste of espresso and addictive crème brulee vanilla in a luscious chocolate Vienna dough crust. Get your caffeine kick and sugar rush in one bite. Plus, the hunt for the ultimate videoke star continues with Week Two of The Bellevue Idol. The Bellevue Hotel, the most happening hotspot south of Metro Manila packs its 20/20 entertainment bar every Monday with guests who love singing. Recent winners are Ellain Efuelo and Barbara Ann Abrogar, who amazed the judges—singer and former band member of Freestyle Tops Suzara, Goodyear president Dave Morin and Bellevue beverage manager Maan Uy—with their unique singing styles. Join The Bellevue Idol by calling 771-8181 and have a chance to win a Boracay holiday and a month-long stint as Bellevue's videoke nights host.

GPHS, DLSU LIPA CONTRACT SIGNING

The Garden Plaza Hotel and Suites (GPHS) located in Paco, Manila was chosen as the official residence for the school year 2006 of the College of Nursing of De La Salle University Lipa, Batangas. The students will be in Manila to take their on-the-job training in selected hospitals. Present during the contract signing held at the Garden Plaza Hotel are (seated, from left) Liza Buenaventura - GPHS operations manager, Anita Urbi - DLSU Lipa dean for College of Nursing, Alma Gatchalian Yu - GPHS sales manager; (standing from left) Vincent De Silva - GPHS front office manager, Anna Arellano - GPHS senior account manager, Connie Orlina - GPHS account manager and Isidro Asuncion - GPHS general manager.

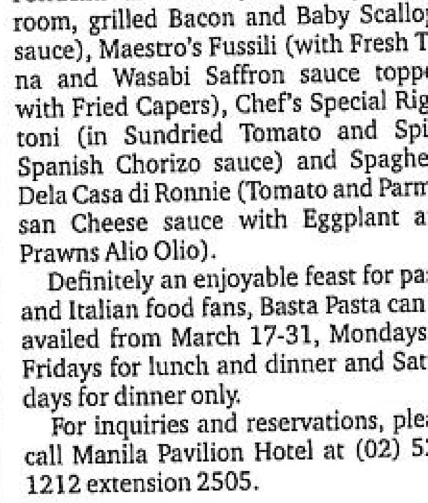
Basta Pasta at the Manila Pavilion Hotel

THE INTRICATE ART OF PASTA MAKING is accomplished to perfection at Manila Pavilion Hotel's Rotisserie, in a promotion titled Basta Pasta!

Thin, thick, straight, twisted, or shaped in a most unusual way, it's all in the menu as Basta Pasta features this well loved dish in all its glorious versatility. Choose from Ravioli di Bong (with Fresh Seafood in Lobster Parmesan Cream), Penne Don Ricky (with grilled Chicken Breast in Tomato Olive Pesto), Fettucini al Jo-an (in Creamy Mushroom, grilled Bacon and Baby Scallops sauce), Maestro's Fussili (with Fresh Tuna and Wasabi Saffron sauce topped with Fried Capers), Chef's Special Rigatoni (in Sundried Tomato and Spicy Spanish Chorizo sauce) and Spaghetti Dela Casa di Ronnie (Tomato and Parmesan Cheese sauce with Eggplant and Prawns Alio Olio).

Definitely an enjoyable feast for pasta and Italian food fans, Basta Pasta can be availed from March 17-31, Mondays to Fridays for lunch and dinner and Saturdays for dinner only.

For inquiries and reservations, please call Manila Pavilion Hotel at (02) 526-1212 extension 2505.



Affordable banquet packages at City Garden Hotel

THE ISO 9001:2000 CERTIFIED City Garden Hotel Makati, presents banquet packages geared to take away the hassles and stress of doing it on your own. Party packages goes for as low as P24,750+ inclusive of buffet menu or barbecue grill and discounts on drinks. Its wedding and debut packages come for as low as P59,000+ inclusive of a buffet menu for 100 persons, a cake, souvenirs, floral arrangements, and other amenities. Receptions venues may be held at its cozy, fully -equipped function rooms or at the al fresco Roofdeck, with a wonderful view of the metropolis. Hold your party on a weekday and enjoy further discount of almost 10-30 percent from the package.

Its luxurious yet cozy environment immediately transports you away from the hustle and bustle of the city into its uniquely comforting environment, a perfect retreat for a stressed out businessman. Its 160-well appointed Italian inspired rooms make for a comfortable stay, without keeping one totally away from it all. For as low as P1,450 per person based on twin sharing, all the rooms are equipped with the latest room amenities. like cable TV with remote control, in-room safe, IDD/NDD telephone, automated wake-up call, well-stocked minibar, facsimile access port, and a fast Internet access. In fact, wherever you are in the hotel, one can easily avail of a fast Internet access.

Those needing extra pampering, the Body & Face by Mendez at the hotel's Upper Penthouse level has special packages for individuals, couples or group.

Accessibility is also not a problem as the hotel is just five minutes from the Rockwell and Glorietta malls and the Makati Commercial and Business District. As an added amenity, the hotel is offering free scheduled shuttle service to the Makati CBD.

City Garden Hotel Makati is located in Makati's restaurant strip at 7870 Makati Avenue corner Kalayaan Avenue, Makati City. For reservations or inquires, please call (02) 899-1111, or its domestic toll free number 1-800-101-GARDEN (427336), or at www.citygardenhotels.com .

People, Events & Products

2006 Annual Horse Show and Summer Activity Expo

THE WORLD WATCHED IN AWE AS OUR very own riders rode their horses to victory in the recently concluded South East Asian Games in December 2005. And to ensure our growing dominance in the sport, Equisport Concepts has been producing a series of successful Show-jumping Competitions since 2003 that have become a nesting ground for our country's next riding champions. With proper guidance and training, winning the much-coveted gold medal in the Olympics and the World Champions will no longer be a dream but a reality.

On April 1 and 2, Equisport Concepts will be hosting the 2006 Annual Horse Show and Summer Activity Expo at the Manila Polo Club in Forbes, Makati. Witness a display of grace, strength, and agility during this two-day competition.

We have invited other international athletes to come and display their talent along side our riders. Regional winners, All Stars, will show their wining break dance routine. The Olympians Taekwondo Training Center will also have an exhibition and many others. Come and see what activities your kids may be interested in. Maybe one day, they can be the next Philippine champions.

Looking for other summer activities for you kids? Everybody is invited to visit and sign up at the on-site summer activities expo. We have a one-stop shop for summer activities that you can sign up for. This includes karate, cooking, music, theatre, riding, soccer, dancing, martial arts, arts and crafts, computer, wall climbing and swimming.

Little children can also enjoy pony-rides and other exciting kiddie activities. This is definitely a family event not to miss. So start your summer right. Join the fun on April 1 at 2 at the Manila Polo Club and make this a fun-filled family event. Admission is free!

LEIGH AND GABLE. Her beauty matched his masculine presence.

Memorable tandems heat up the movie screen

By Behn Cervantes

THE MOST BEAUTIFUL HOLLYWOOD actresses, when paired with the handsomest leading men, often result in noteworthy screen chemistry.

Ava Gardner was considered the most beautiful star of them all by Hollywood's leading cinematographers and make-up artists. Naturally, when she teamed up with handsome Gregory Peck in "Snows of Kilimanjaro," their close-ups were wondrous to behold! The memorable tandem had the appeal of opposing poles that attract.

Ava was equally effective with suave Tyrone Power in "The Sun Also Rises." There was chemistry both on and off screen between her and Robert Taylor in "Knights of the Round Table." When she teamed up with her idol, Clark Gable, in "Mogambo," the electricity affected even the bland Grace Kelly.

Lavishly pretty

Elizabeth Taylor was so lavishly pretty that she "swallowed up" most of her leading men. Barely 17, she was beautiful but immature beside the handsome Robert Taylor in "The Conspirator." Since Robert wasn't a great actor, they were fine to look at, but there was no chemistry to speak of.

However, she succeeded in turning on the heat when she was starred with her buddy and former crush, Montgomery Clift, in "A Place in the Sun." Their near-perfect features complemented each other so well that the movie audience was glued to the screen.

Ingrid Bergman was one of Hollywood's most luminous screen beauties. Since she was quite tall, she looked great beside Gregory Peck in "Spellbound." Her Swedish iceberg "heat" worked extremely well with Gary Cooper's earthy and easy-going personality. They were a successful team-up in Ferber's "Saratoga Trunk" and Hemingway's "For Whom the Bell Tolls."

Vivien Leigh was truly one of Hollywood's most beautiful actresses. Her Oscar-winning Scarlett O'Hara characterization needed the masculine presence of Clark Gable in "Gone with the Wind."

Near-perfect features

Dark-haired Linda Darnell was one of filmdom's most beautiful actresses. Tyrone Power was needed to balance her scintillating screen presence in films like "The Mark of Zorro" and "Blood and Sand.".

Audrey Hepburn was gifted with unconventionally intriguing looks that created fashion, coiffure and make-up trends. Her Continental flair gelled so well with urbane Gregory Peck in "A Roman Holiday," that the European actress won the Oscar for her first Hollywood film!

However, there is no physical quality more delectable than youth. So, when Franco Zefferelli cast real teenagers Olivia Hussey and Leonard Whiting in Shakespeare's "Romeo and Juliet," the two young British actors created excitingly visceral chemistry remembered to this day!

TAYLOR AND CLIFT. Sizzling chemistry.

Batanes . . .

From page A2-4

Participants will be exposed to practical situations to test their mettle through a "Learn by doing" strategy. The emphasis will be on composition, as well as learning to use outdoor illumination and color.

Call 899-1767 or 896-3208, or visit Room 227, LRI Business Plaza, 210 Nicanor Garcia Street, Bel Air II, Makati City. You may also call Wally Trinidad at 521-7866. Meanwhile, the Mandy Navasero Annual Summer Photoworkshop will be held from April 8 to May 27.

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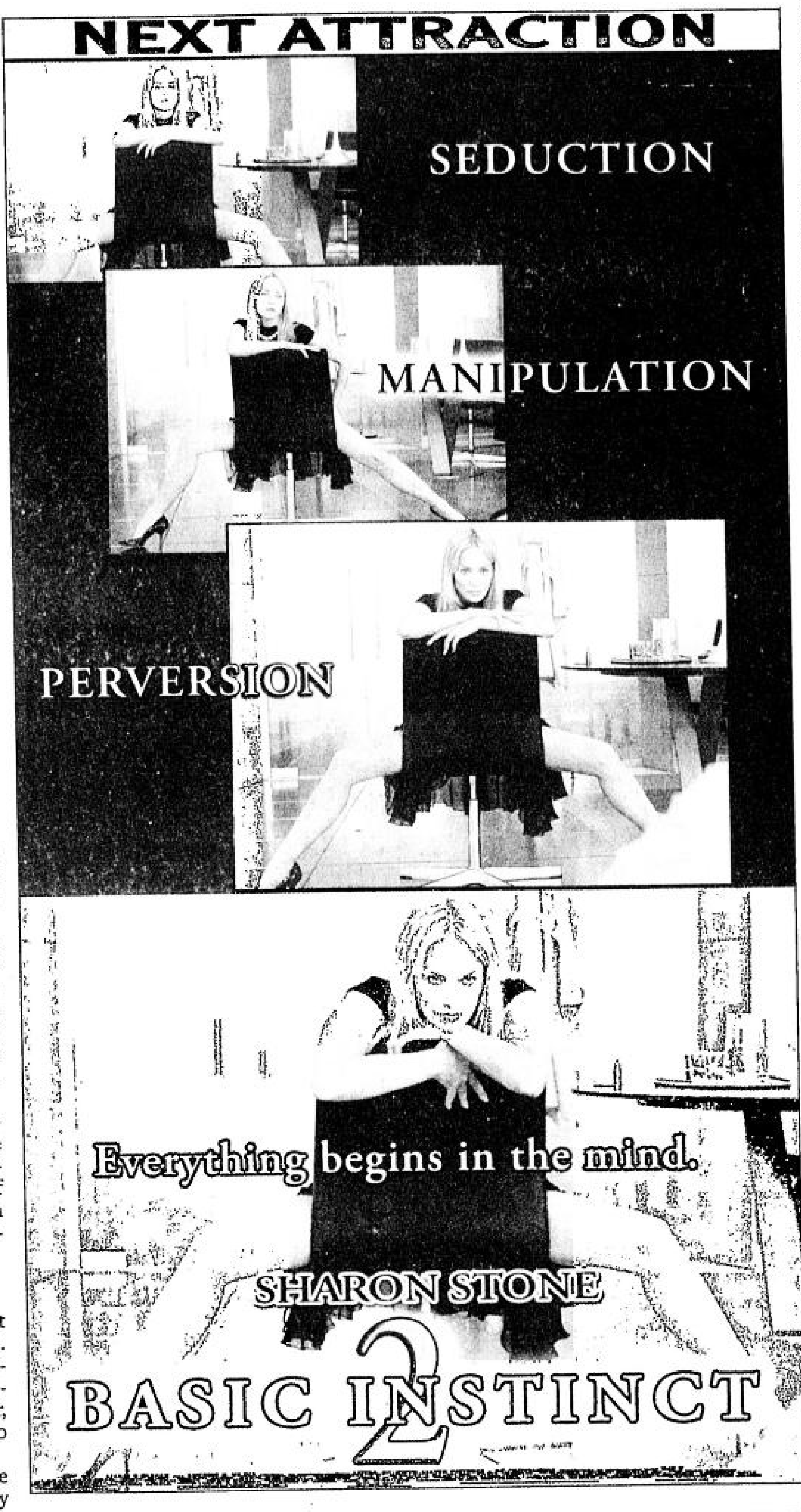

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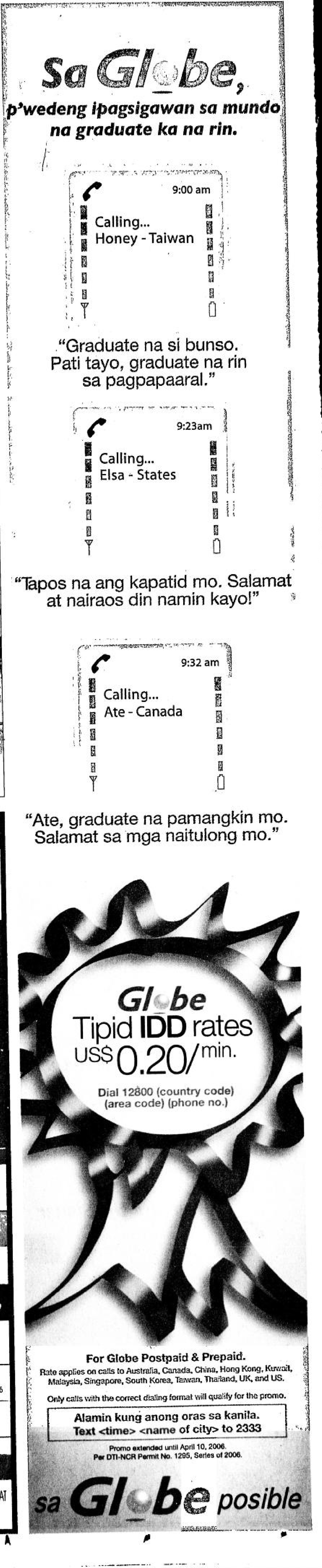

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Calling...
Elsa - States
"Tapos na ang kapatid mo. Salamat at nairaos din namin kayo!"
9:32 am
Calling...
Ate - Canada
"Ate, graduate na pamangkin mo. Salamat sa mga naitulong mo."
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Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 1295, Series of 2006.
sa Globe posible

Jurors should raise standards for kiddie singing tilts

FERNANDEZ. Sensible.

By Nestor U. Torre

WE'RE ENCOURAGED TO SEE THAT POPS Fernandez, Buboy Garrovillo, and Joey Reyes have been tapped to serve as jurors for both the younger and older categories of Channel 2's "Little Big Star" kiddie singing tilt ("final-finals" are on April 8).

We hope that, being educated and sensible people who care about the proper development of children, they will join us in our little campaign to stop the prevalent practice of making child singers perform songs with lyrics that are much too mature for their tender, impressionable and vulnerable years.

Romantic love

Specifically, we're concerned about little singers who gyrate provocatively as they intone lyrics about romantic love—and passion.

We've tried to convince the "Little Big Star" people—and the young contestants' parents and handlers—that this isn't healthy for the children, and some child psychologists have joined us in our campaign, but the pernicious practice persists.

Maybe, if jurors Pops, Buboy and Joey see it fit to weigh in on the issue, the proper reforms can finally be instituted?

All they have to do is to state their preference for songs with child-friendly lyrics, and you can bet that the show and the young contestants' parents will make the long-delayed adjustment—pronto.

Or else, the jurors can intimate that they will give plus points to contestants who sing songs appropriate for their tender ages, and the same positive change will happen.

Excessive

While they're at it, the jurors can also express dismay at the excessive way that many child talents in the tilt are being dolled up, with heavy make-up, dangling earrings, "sexy" outfits, gowns, bangles and beads, etc. Oh, please.

The big question, of course, is why kid singers' parents, who should know better, would make their children perform musical numbers about romantic love, longing, loss, anger, vindictiveness and sex.

It must be because they believe that adult hit songs can give their kids a more popular showcase for displaying their vocal range, "total performer" ability, trendiness, etc.

There could be some truth to that, but the negative effects far outweigh that possible advantage. Kids have the right to remain kids before their teen years, because they need all that time and space to assimilate, process and get a handle on the more mature aspects of growing up and living that they'll have to confront after adolescence.

Processing period

If that processing period is rushed, the kids could end up as less emotionally and psychologically healthy and balanced—and who would want *that* to happen to anybody's kid?

As for the people behind "Little Big Star," they've been cautioned often enough, so their continued blithe inaction in this regard is an indication of bad judgment.

Batanes photo safari

STREET SMART

Mandy Navasero

THE ISLANDS OF Batanes are a mystery to many Filipinos. It is a unique destination—isolated and stark, comparable to the bleak highlands of Scotland, Ireland or New Zealand.

Batanes is found at the northernmost tip of the country, and is composed of three major islands—Batan, Sabtang and Itbayat—and seven islets. The climate in Batanes is several degrees cooler, and the islands virtually unprotected from the elements.

Shores

Almost half of Batanes consists of windswept hills, and the shores are strewn with boulders. There is only one flight to and from Batanes everyday *via* Asian Spirit (except Wednesdays).

Batanes is the nation's smallest province. Its capital, Basco, was named after Gov. Jose Basco y Vargas, who brought the island under Spanish rule in 1762.

The architectural remnants of Spanish occupation remain untouched. Its original residents call themselves Ivatan, which is also the language spoken by almost everyone in the islands. Ilocano, English and Tagalog are also used.

Immersion

I will be joined by Fiesta Tour's Wally Trinidad in bringing enthusiasts on a photo safari for three nights and four days of immersion in the environment and lifestyle of the Islands.

BATANES/ A2-3

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CINEMA 5 ULTRAVIOLET 10:45, 1:05, 3:20, 5:35, 7:50, 10:10 PG13
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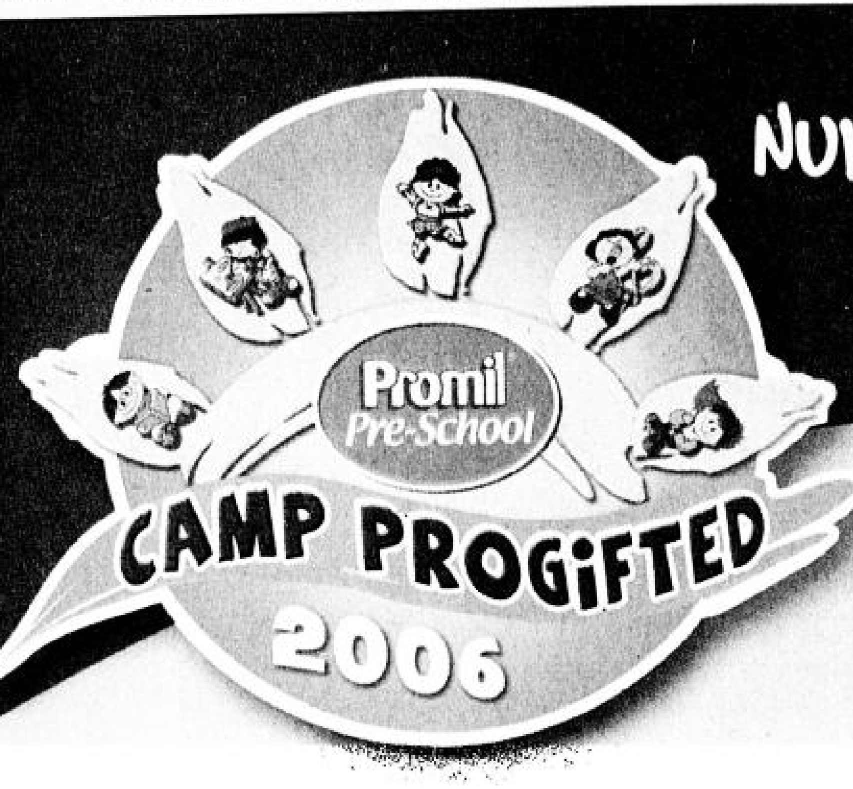

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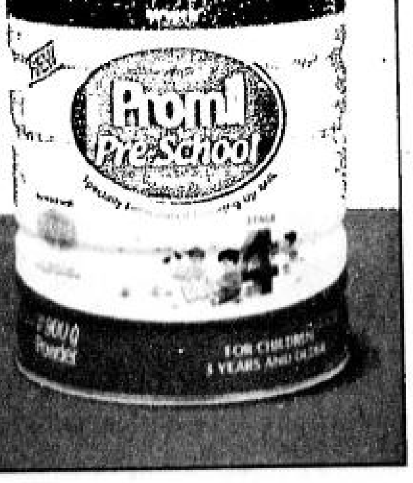

SATURDAY Special

Provocative themes, catchy titles capture viewers' imagination

SHOW BIZ Q & A

Rito P. Asilo

JONES. Won best actor prize at Cannes filmfest last year.

FROM ROSARIO LIBAYEN: **"Good films and their catchy titles fascinate me. They grab viewers' attention and capture their imagination. My favorite movies include 'To Kill a Mockingbird,' 'One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest' and 'The Constant Gardener.'"**

PEREZ. Played a beautiful woman in "Those Who Love Me Can Take the Train."

Yes, Rosario, a movie's catchy title does help whip up interest in it. But, the weight of its content will ultimately make or break it in the eyes of a discriminating film buff:

In **"The Three Burials of Melquiades Estrada,"** directed by and starring Cannes best actor winner, Tommy Lee Jones, ranch-hand Pete (Jones) seeks to fulfill a promise he made to bury his best friend in his hometown in Mexico.

Social revolution

In Ermanno Olmi's lengthy Italian art-house fare, **"The Tree of Wooden Clogs,"** four peasant families go about their humdrum lives, indifferent to the social revolution happening in the city. The title refers to the cutting of a whole tree just to produce a pair of wooden shoes.

A dear friend who recently visited Seoul for a medical conference got us **"Virgin Stripped Bare by Her Bachelors"** (2000). It sounds like an exploitative B-movie—*but*, it's not. There are no virgins stripped down to their knickers in the film. In fact, it is a noirish black-and-white flick that examines modern courtship in Korea. And, while the movie is six years old, it was released in the US only recently.

In Andrzej Zulawski's **"My Nights Are More Beautiful than Your Days"** (France), a medium (Sophie Marceau) falls in love with a terminally-ill computer geek.

Stephen Bradley's **"Boy Eats Girl"** is not a pornographic feature. It is, in fact, Ireland's contribution to the looming zombie-movie market, about a teenager who dies after declaring his eternal love for lead actress Samantha Mumba (who recently recorded a duet with our very own Jay-R). But, as the song goes: Love moves in mysterious ways, *especially* when the dead protagonist is brought back to life by his mother—as a flesh-eating albeit lovelorn zombie!

Newlywed couple

In the same vein, **"Zombie Honeymoon"** is about a newlywed couple attacked by a zombie, who emerges from the sea while the romantic twosome is canoodling in the sand. To say the least, the production takes the adage "till death do us part" to heart!

Kim Dae-Seung's **"Bungee Jumping on Their Own"** is about a married teacher who's reunited with the love of his life. The catch: She died 17 years ago, and may have reincarnated in the body of boy, who's a high school student of the film's spooked protagonist! And we thought Jonathan Glazer's "Birth" was weird...

Young love

Another interesting title is Isao Yukisada's **"Crying Out Love in the Center of the World,"** about young love shattered by leukemia. Ten years later, the now grown-up man rediscovers tape-recordings from his long-departed first love.

We found our copy of Stephen Kay's **"The Last Time I Committed Suicide"** in Singapore, a searing look at the life of the Beat Generation's Jack Kerouac, Neal Cassady and Allen Ginsberg, starring Thomas Jane—doing the full monty!—*and* Keannu Reeves in a cameo.

In the Irish film, Lab Ky Mo's very funny **"Nine Dead Gay Guys"** (shown two years ago at the local Pink filmfest), two clueless lads brave it through London's gay scene. Rene Bueno's **"7 Women, 1 Homosexual and Carlos"** (Spain) is about a guy who tries to beat the odds to remain faithful to his wife.

Star-struck

Penelope Cruz topbills another Spanish film, **"Love Can Seriously Damage Your Health,"** about a star-struck Beatles fan who's bent on meeting John Lennon at all costs during the Beatles' visit to Spain in 1965.

German auteur Werner Herzog's satirical **"Even Dwarves Started Small"** features midgets taking over a repressive institution.

His latest documentary, **"The Grizzly Man,"** one of last year's best films, is a deeply provocative, cautionary tale about the life and death of grizzly-bear activist, Timothy Treadwell—one movie you *shouldn't* miss!

"Water Drops on Burning Rocks," Francois Ozon's thought-provoking film adaptation of Rainer Werner Fassbinder's play, details the love affair between a 50-year-old businessman and a 19-year-old boy.

"Those Who Love Me Can Take the Train," from French director Patrice Chereau ("Intimacy"), explores the varying degrees of affection for a recently-deceased painter. Several characters take the train from Paris to Limoges to attend the burial services. The cast includes French

PROVOCATIVE/ A3-2

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GALLERIA 632-9116

1 NORTH COUNTRY • THX
1:35 4:20 7:05 9:50
2 NANNY MCPHEE
1:00 3:15 5:30 7:45 10:00
3 GLORY ROAD
11:30 2:05 4:40 7:15 9:50
4 V FOR VENDETTA
1:20 4:10 7:00 9:50
5 ULTRAVIOLET
11:00 1:10 3:20 5:30 7:40 9:50
6 SHE'S THE MAN
12:20 2:45 5:10 7:35 10:00
7 CO-ED SCANDAL
1:00 3:10 5:20 7:30 9:40
8 CASANOVA
12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00
9 HOSTEL
1:10 3:20 5:30 7:40 9:50
10 BROKEBACK MOUNTAIN
1:30 4:20 7:10 10:00

ERMITA 536-7809 to 12

1 NANNY MCPHEE 12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50
2 HOSTEL 12:30 2:30
V FOR VENDETTA 4:40 7:20 9:50
3 ULTRAVIOLET
12:20 2:20 4:20 6:20 8:25 10:00
4 CO-ED SCANDAL
12:00 2:00 4:00 6:00 8:00 9:50
5 SHE'S THE MAN
12:00 2:00 4:00 6:00 8:00 10:00
6 GLORY ROAD
12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50
7 NORTH COUNTRY
12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00

METRO EAST 682-8193 • 682-8199

1 HOUSE OF FURY
1:00 3:00 5:00 7:00 9:00
2 NANNY MCPHEE
11:45 2:05 4:25 6:45 9.05
3 SHE'S THE MAN
1:40 4:00 6:30 9:00
4 V FOR VENDETTA
1:10 3:50 6:30 9:00
5 HOSTEL
1:00 3:00 5:00 7:000 9:00
6 ULTRAVIOLET
12:10 2:25 4:40 6:55 9:10
7 GLORY ROAD
1:00 3:40 6:20 9:00
8 CO-ED SCANDAL
12:15 2:00 3:45 5:30 7:15 9:00

NOVALICHES 935-3231 / 935-3229-30

1 ULTRAVIOLET
2 GLORY ROAD
3 HOSTEL
4 V FOR VENDETTA
5 NANNY MCPHEE

CITISQUARE MALABON 288-2576

1 HOSTEL
2 TIGER BLADE
3 RESERVE
4 RESERVE

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1 NANNY MCPHEE
2 SHE'S THE MAN
3 ULTRAVIOLET
4 GLORY ROAD

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2 SYRIANA
3 SHAGGY DOG
4 DATE MOVIE

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2 TIGER BLADE
3 V FOR VENDETTA
4 THE DARK
5 SHAGGY DOG

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2 CASANOVA
3 FINAL DESTINATION 3
4 16 BLOCKS

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2 HOSTEL
3 V FOR VENDETTA
4 HOUSE OF FURY

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2 MURDER
3 SHAGGY DOG
4 V FOR VENDETTA
5 SYRIANA
6 THE DARK

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1 16 BLOCKS
2 DATE MOVIE
3 CASANOVA
4 GOAL
5 PRIDE AND PREJUDICE
6 V FOR VENDETTA

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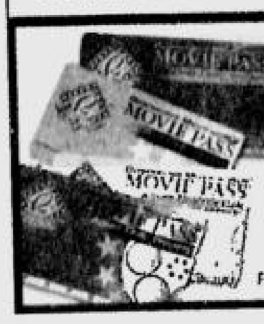
1 V FOR VENDETTA
2 SHAGGY DOG
3 DATE MOVIE
4 PRIDE AND PREJUDICE
5 SYRIANA



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METRO MANILA

THE PODIUM
NANNY McPHEE
11:45 FS / 12:15 MF / 04:35
06:45 / 08:25 LFS
09:00 LMF / 10:40 END
NORTH COUNTRY
12:30 FS / 12:50 MF / 03:30
06:10 / 8:20LFS
08:50 LMF / 11:00 END

SM MEGACINEMA
1 GLORY ROAD
2 RESERVED
3 SHAGGY DOG
4 RESERVED
5 SHE'S THE MAN
6 NANNY McPHEE
7 FEARLESS
8 16 BLOCKS
9 FINAL DESTINATION 3
10 ULTRAVIOLET
11 V FOR VENDETTA
12 NORTH COUNTRY

SM CITY NORTH EDSA
1 NANNY McPHEE
2 GLORY ROAD
3 NORTH COUNTRY
4 RESERVED
5 FINAL DESTINATION 3
6 SHE'S THE MAN
7 V FOR VENDETTA
8 ULTRAVIOLET

SM CITY DASMARINAS
1 THE DARK
2 UNDERCLASS MAN
3 SHAGGY DOG
4 BIG MOMMA'S HOUSE

SM CITY FAIRVIEW
1 FEARLESS
2 HOUSE OF FURY
3 THE DARK
4 V FOR VENDETTA
5 GLORY ROAD
6 CLOSE TO YOU
7 ULTRAVIOLET
8 NANNY McPHEE
9 SHE'S THE MAN
10 FINAL DESTINATION 3
11 16 BLOCKS
12 SHAGGY DOG

SM CITY STA. MESA
1 ULTRAVIOLET
2 V FOR VENDETTA
3 NANNY McPHEE
4 FINAL DESTINATION 3
5 SHE'S THE MAN
6 FEARLESS
7 GLORY ROAD
8 16 BLOCKS
9 NORTH COUNTRY
10 SHAGGY DOG

SM CITY BICUTAN
1 ULTRAVIOLET
2 HOUSE OF FURY
3 THE DARK
4 V FOR VENDETTA

SM CITY SAN LAZARO
1 ULTRAVIOLET
2 SHAGGY DOG
3 V FOR VENDETTA
4 FINAL DESTINATION 3
5 SHE'S THE MAN
6 NANNY McPHEE

SM CITY MANILA
1 GLORY ROAD
2 V FOR VENDETTA
3 SHE'S THE MAN
4 ULTRAVIOLET
5 NANNY McPHEE
6 16 BLOCKS
11:00FS / 01:10 MF
03:15 / 05:20
07: 25 / 09:10 LFS
09:30 LMF / 11:15 END
7 SHAGGY DOG
8 FEARLESS
9 BIG MOMMA'S HOUSE
10 FINAL DESTINATION 3
11 THE DARK
12 NORTH COUNTRY

SM CITY SOUTHMALL
1 ULTRAVIOLET
2 NORTH COUNTRY
3 RESERVED
4 V FOR VENDETTA
5 NANNY McPHEE
6 GLORY ROAD
7 SHE'S THE MAN
8 FINAL DESTINATION 3
9 FEARLESS/ 16 BLOCKS
10 RESERVED

SM SUPERCENTER VALENZUELA
1 SHAGGY DOG
2 FINAL DESTINATION 3
3 HOUSE OF FURY
4 GLORY ROAD

SM CITY SUCAT
1 HOUSE OF FURY
2 ULTRAVIOLET
3 V FOR VENDETTA
4 16 BLOCKS

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LUZON

SM CITY BAGUIO
1 16 BLOCKS
2 SHAGGY DOG
3 THE DARK
4 V FOR VENDETTA

SM CITY MARILAO
1 V FOR VENDETTA
2 HOUSE OF FURY
3 SHAGGY DOG
4 THE DARK

SM CITY BATANGAS
1 BIG MOMMA'S HOUSE
2 THE DARK
3 FEARLESS
4 AEON FLUX

SM CITY BACOOR
1 FEARLESS
2 SHAGGY DOG
3 V FOR VENDETTA
4 GLORY ROAD
5 FINAL DESTINATION 3
6 SHE'S THE MAN
7 HOUSE OF FURY
8 BREAKING NEWS

SM CITY STA. ROSA
1 CASANOVA
2 FINAL DESTINATION 3
3 BIG MOMMA'S HOUSE
4 16 BLOCKS

SM CITY PAMPANGA
1 SYRIANA
2 SHAGGY DOG
3 FINAL DESTINATION 3
4 V FOR VENDETTA
5 THE DARK
6 16 BLOCKS

SM CITY LUCENA
1 FEARLESS
2 SHAGGY DOG
3 SYRIANA
4 AEON FLUX

SM CITY MOLINO
1 SHAGGY DOG
2 HOUSE OF FURY
3 V FOR VENDETTA
4 CRY WOLF

VISAYAS MINDANAO

SM CITY CEBU
1 SYRIANA
10:50FS / 11:10 MF
01:45 / 04:20
06: 55 / 09:05 LFS
09:30 LMF / 11:40 END
2 CASANOVA
10:50FS / 11:00 MF
01:06 / 03:12 / 05:18
07:24 / 09:15 LFS
09:30 LMF / 11:20 END
3 V FOR VENDETTA
11:15FS / 11:30 MF
02:00 / 04:30
07:00 / 09:15 LFS
09:30 LMF / 11:45 END
4 LAST HOLIDAY
5 CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN 2
6 FEARLESS
7 NEW WORLD
8 HOUSE OF FURY

SM CITY ILOILO
1 FEARLESS
2 RESERVED
3 SYRIANA
4 CRY WOLF
5 V FOR VENDETTA
6 SHAGGY DOG
7 RESERVED
8 PRIDE & PREJUDICE

SM CITY DAVAO
1 BIG MOMMA'S HOUSE
2 GOAL
3 V FOR VENDETTA
4 FINAL DESTINATION 3
5 PRIDE & PREJUDICE
6 NEW WORLD

SM CITY CAGAYAN
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2 RESERVED
3 16 BLOCKS
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R. Valencia and S. Bismark

Recess

RECESS, A FAvorite period among school children, is always a welcome break from stressful classroom activities. Today, that may be changing.

Recently, a friend had to do practicum work in a public school. During recess, she observed a strange situation:

1. Her second grade students went back to the classroom after picking up food and drinks from the cafeteria.

The packaged snacks were priced higher than usual.

Cooperative

2. Teachers were asked to encourage students to purchase snack items sold by the teachers' cooperative, where a quota of P10 per child was set.

During the first semester, our friend saw for herself the "selling" technique of a teacher.

When one student refused to buy juice from the coop, because his mother sent him water for recess, the teacher spanked the kid and remarked: "Next time, *don't* bring water!" Most of the kids were from poor families.

Mandatory

During the second semester, our friend was assigned to a soft-spoken teacher. Due to the existing quota system, the teacher would make up for absent kids by buying the mandatory perishable items herself!

Our friend commented, "The cooperative was put up to help teachers financially and facilitate student purchases. But, the quota system has put great pressure on teachers and students alike."

Yes, teachers need to supplement their income, but not at the expense of people who are themselves struggling to survive.

Let us not use authority to abuse people. It is sinful in the eyes of the Supreme Father.

Provocative

From page A3-1

superstar Vincent Perez ("Queen Margot")—as a beautiful girl! Eat your heart out, Cillian Murphy ("Breakfast on Pluto")!

Finally, there's Lina Wertmuller's 1974 Italian classic, "Swept Away... by an Unusual Destiny in the Blue Sea of August," which was remade in 2002 by Guy Ritchie ("Lock, Stock and Two Smoking Barrels") and his wife, Madonna—with disastrous results:

Ritchie's remake was nominated for seven Razzies—and won five! To cap its "impressive" rep, it was nominated last year as the "worst drama in 25 years"—*but*, it lost to the John Travolta starrer "Battlefield Earth." Bummer!

THIS SUMMER, PREPARE TO WITNESS AN EXTRAORDINARY LOVE STORY

SHE LIVES IN THE PAST... HE LIVES IN THE PRESENT
CAN LOVE DEFY THE BOUNDS OF TIME?
DINGDONG DANTES
KARYLLE
Moments of Love
A FILM BY MARK A. REYES V, DGPI

CAST MALL TOUR:
WITH SPECIAL GUEST - FAITH CUNETA

MARCH 25 - SM FAIRVIEW , 4:00 p.m.
MARCH 26 - SM NORTH EDSA , 5:00 p.m.
APRIL 1 - SM VALENZUELA , 4:00 p.m.
APRIL 2 - GLORIETTA 2 , 5:30 p.m.

MTRCB RATING ▶ G
GENERAL PATRONAGE
ALL AGES ADMITTED

OPENS MARCH 29

Text MOMENTS ON to 4627 for Smart / Talk 'N Text or 2364 for Globe / Sun

GMAFILMS

#1 MOVIE in MANILA!

MTRCB RATING ▶ PG-13 | children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult

2ND WEEK
LOVE IN DISGUISE
Amanda BYNES
She's THE MAN
ARE YOU REALLY WHO YOU ARE?

POWER PLANT CINEMA
Rockwell Center, Makati City ☎ Tel. No: 8981440-41
DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX

GLORY ROAD G 12:15,2:45,5:15, 7:45,10:15	NANNY MCPHEE G 12:30,2:50,5:10, 7:30,9:50	SHE'S THE MAN PG13 1:45,3:55,6:05, 8:15,10:25
NORTH COUNTRY R13 12:15,2:45,5:15, 7:45,10:15	V FOR VENDETTA R13 1:30,4:20,7:10,10:00	ULTRAVIOLET PG13 2:00,4.00,6:00, 8:00,10:00

MOVIES AND SCREENING SCHEDULES SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE. FOR VERIFICATION CALL 898-1440-41
MATINEE P111.00 – FREE SEATING – SCREENINGS BEFORE 5:00 PM – MON. TO FRI.

EASTWOOD CINEMAS
DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX

Eastwood City Walk 2, Eastwood City
E. Rodriguez Jr. Ave. (C-5) Quezon City

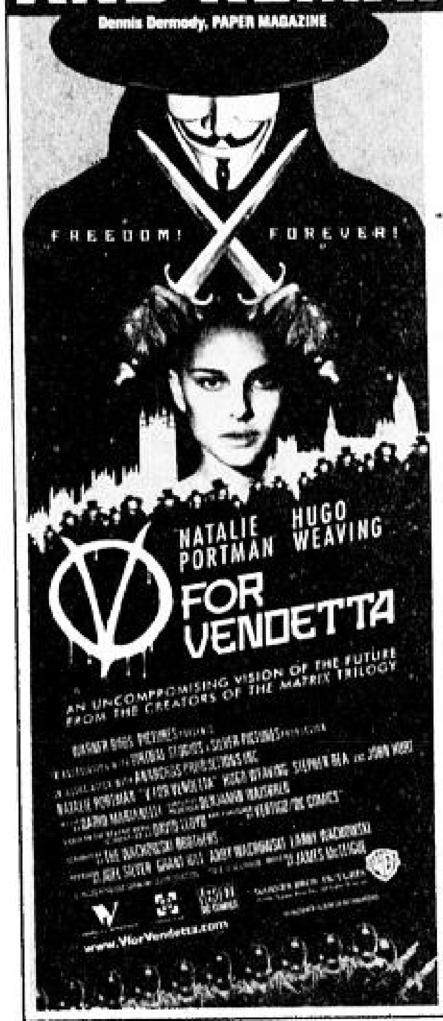
For inquiries, call
687-6963
GUARANTEED SEATS
MOVIES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

1	GLORY ROAD 12:30, 3:10, 5:50, 8:30, 11:00 G	
2	ULTRA VIOLET 12:05, 2:15, 4:25, 6:35, 8:45, 11:00 PG-13	
3	NANNY McPHEE 1:20, 3:45, 6:10, 8:35, 11:00 G	
4	NORTH COUNTRY 11:20, 5:20, 11:00	V FOR VENDETTA 2:20, 8:20
	R-13	

MTRCB RATING R-13 STRICTLY FOR 13YRS. OLD AND ABOVE

"DARING, RADICAL AND REMARKABLE."

Dennis Dermody, PAPER MAGAZINE


FREEDOM! FOREVER!
NATALIE PORTMAN
HUGO WEAVING
V FOR VENDETTA
AN UNCOMPROMISING VISION OF THE FUTURE FROM THE CREATORS OF THE MATRIX TRILOGY
www.VforVendetta.com

"Spectacular and exhilarating."
Michael Wolff, VANITY FAIR

"Bold and thoughtful. 'V for Vendetta' is a terrific movie. It will challenge and trouble you the way a good piece of speculative fiction should."
Richard Corliss, TIME MAGAZINE

"Two thumbs up!"*
EBERT & ROEPER

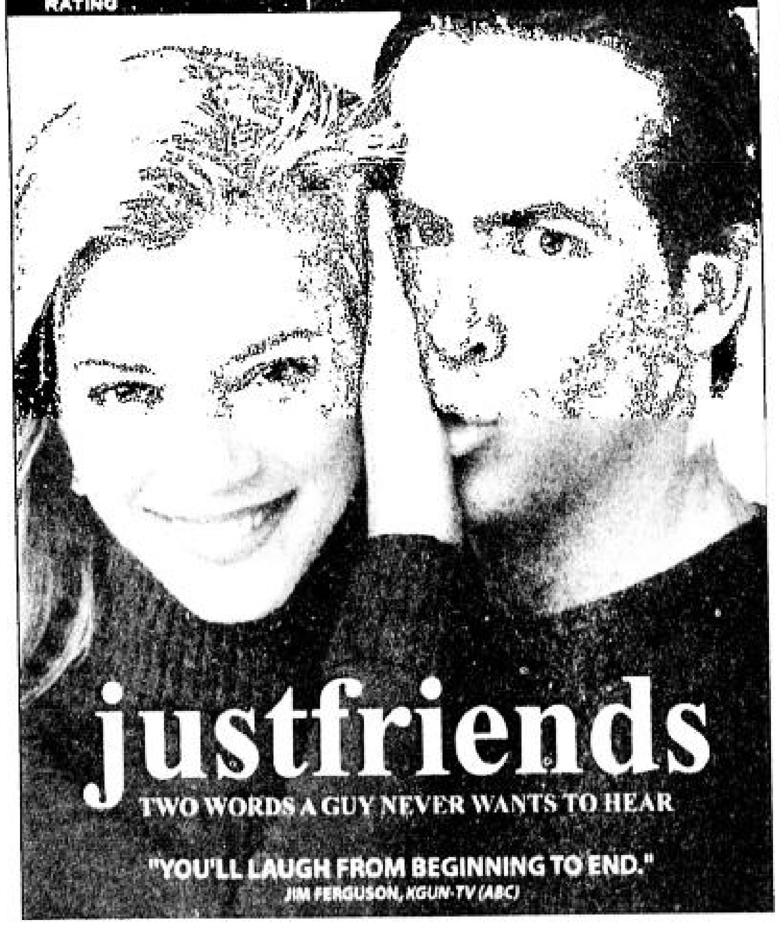
"★★★★ Compelling, rousing and moving."
Glenn Kenny, PREMIERE MAGAZINE

"A double-barreled triumph."
Karen Durbin, ELLE MAGAZINE

NOW SHOWING

OPENS MARCH 29

MTRCB RATING R-13 STRICTLY FOR 13 YEARS OF AGE AND UP

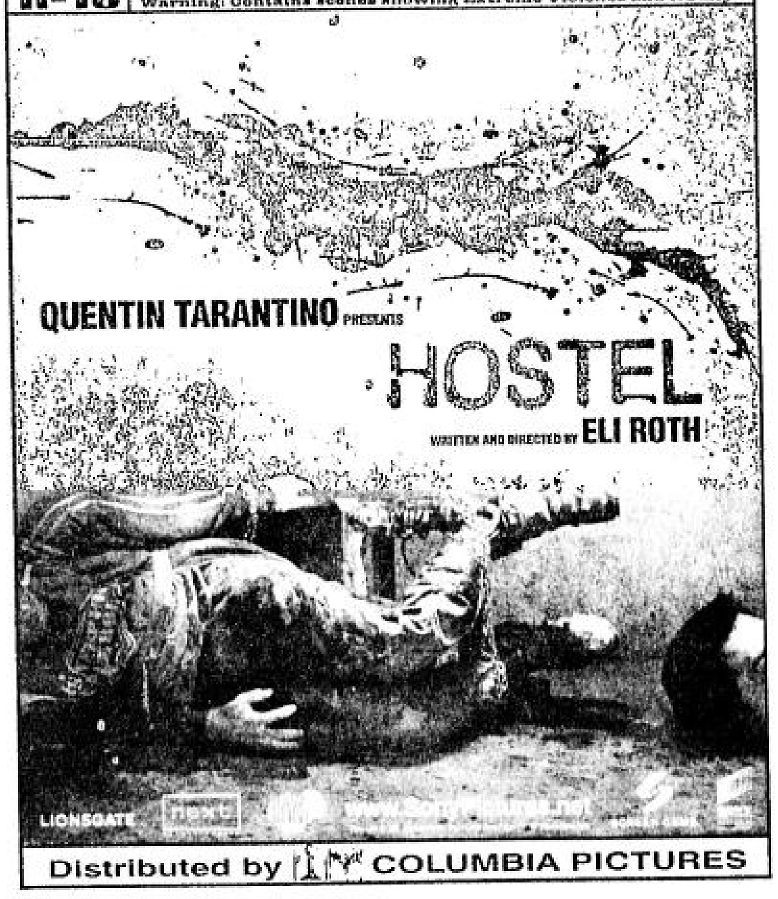

justfriends
TWO WORDS A GUY NEVER WANTS TO HEAR
"YOU'LL LAUGH FROM BEGINNING TO END."
JIM FERGUSON, KGUN-TV (ABC)

Do You Dare See It ?

2ND WEEK

At Selected Theaters Only

R-18 STRICTLY FOR ADULTS ONLY
Warning: Contains scenes showing Extreme Violence and Nudity

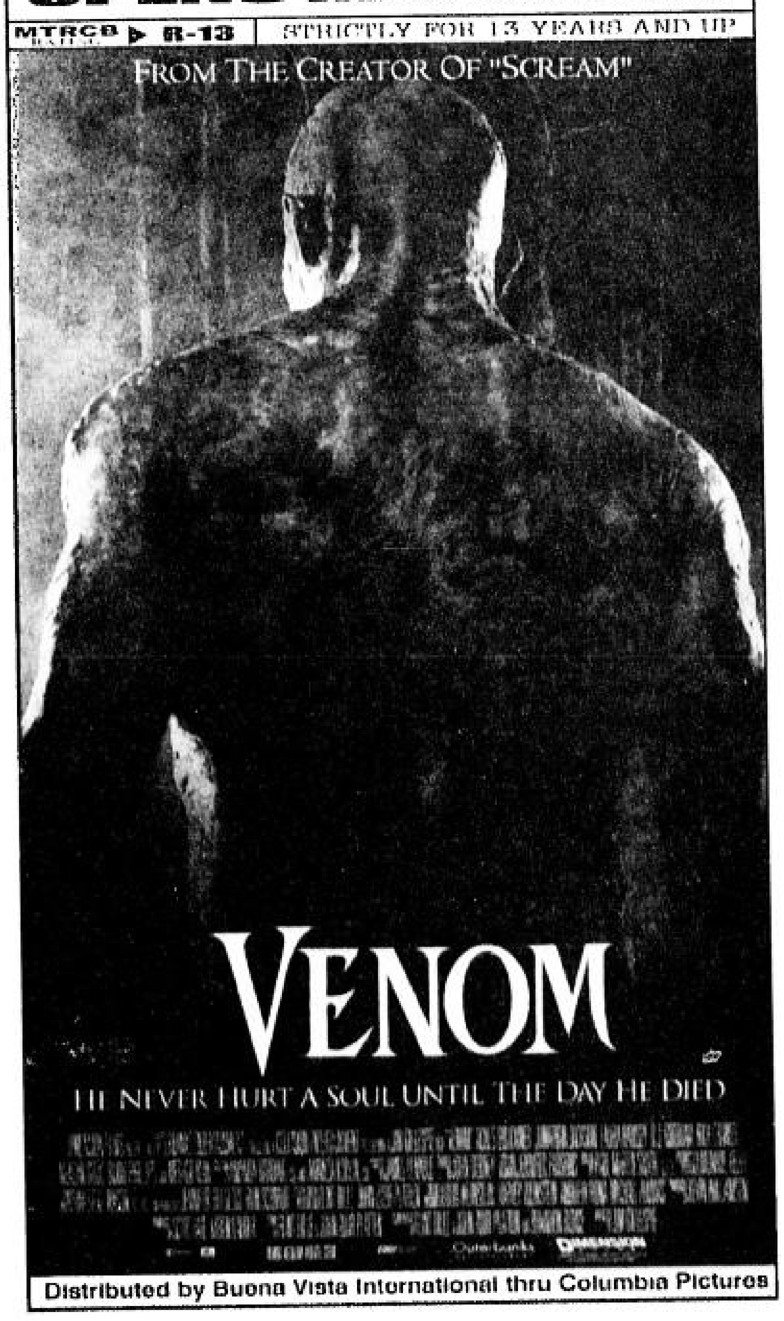

QUENTIN TARANTINO PRESENTS
HOSTEL
WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY ELI ROTH
LIONSGATE
next

Distributed by COLUMBIA PICTURES

PREPARE TO BE TERRIFIED!

OPENS MARCH 29

MTRCB RATING ▶ R-13 | STRICTLY FOR 13 YEARS AND UP


FROM THE CREATOR OF "SCREAM"
VENOM
HE NEVER HURT A SOUL UNTIL THE DAY HE DIED

Distributed by Buena Vista International thru Columbia Pictures

---

2ND WEEK

MTRCB RATING ▶ G | ALL AGES ARE ADMITTED

TIM ALLEN is
Walt Disney PICTURES PRESENTS
THE SHAGGY DOG

Distributed by Buena Vista International thru Columbia Pictures

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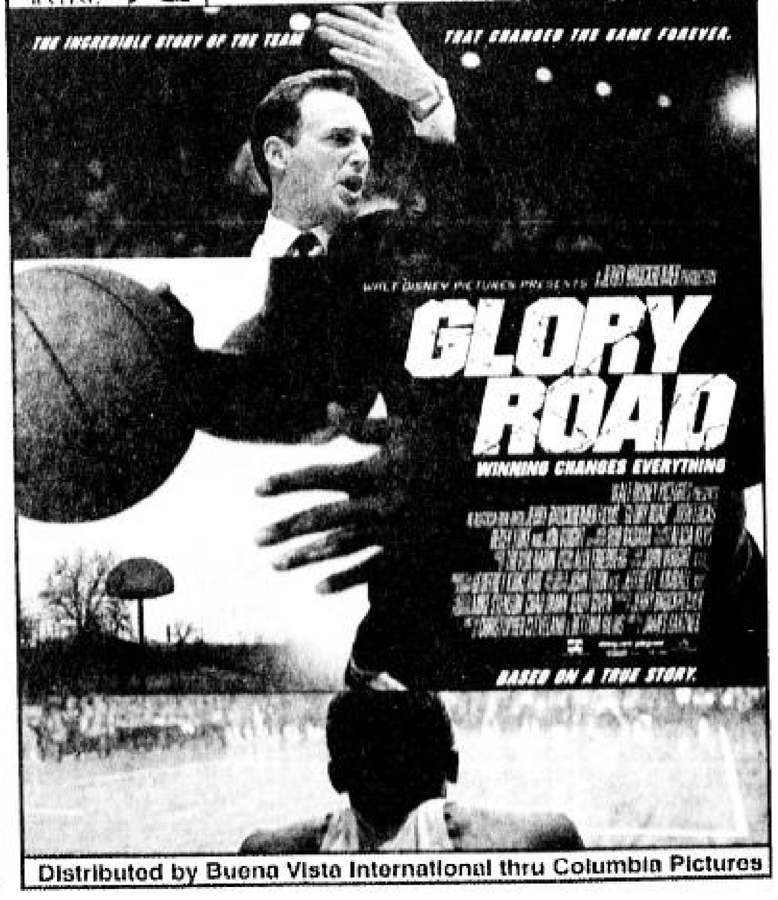
NOW SHOWING

MTRCB RATING ▶ G | ALL AGES ARE ADMITTED


THE INCREDIBLE STORY OF THE TEAM THAT CHANGED THE GAME FOREVER.
WALT DISNEY PICTURES PRESENTS
GLORY ROAD
WINNING CHANGES EVERYTHING
BASED ON A TRUE STORY.

Distributed by Buena Vista International thru Columbia Pictures

DAWSON AND WALKER. Topbill "Rent" and "Eight Below," respectively.

Inspiring films hit the big screen

By Nestor U. Torre

SOME FILMS HAVE THE ABILITY to divert, and others the power to inspire. Here are some inspiring movies showing in or about to hit local theaters:

"Eight Below." The fierce Antarctic winter is just setting in when an intrepid team of explorers and scientists on a research mission narrowly escape a fatal accident, thanks to their steadfast team of eight skilled sled dogs.

Forced to evacuate, the men leave the beloved dogs behind in the frozen wilds—with a promise that they will return. But, when the storm of the century cuts off all means of travel, the dogs are stranded.

Rescue mission

As the intelligent and courageous dogs fight to make it through the most unforgiving winter in recent memory, a survival guide (Paul Walker) is driven to mount a seemingly impossible rescue mission, with the help of a daring bush pilot (Moon Bloodgood).

Despite the daunting difficulties, the humans and the dogs make an inspiring journey of grit, endurance and faith to find one another again.

"Glory Road." A recent box-office hit in the States, this sports drama is based on the true story of the underdog Texas Western basketball team, whose drive to win triumphed over some bruising challenges.

Tournament

Against all odds, the first all-African-American starting lineup of players took the country by storm—and, in a surprising turn of events, won the 1956 NCCA tournament title.

Josh Lucas stars as Hall of Famer Don Haskins, the passionately dedicated college basketball coach who changed the history of basketball.

Among other challenges, the players have to integrate with their white teammates and face discrimination at all fronts: The school administration, alumni, donors, spectators, not to mention other basketball teams.

Victory

Their victory opened doors for black players everywhere, and had an impact on other areas of the nation's life, as well.

"Rent." The film version of the hit stage musical tells the story of a group of bohemians struggling to express themselves through their art, and "measuring their lives in love."

Against the gritty backdrop of New York's East Village, they strive for success and acceptance while coping with the obstacles of poverty, illness and the AIDS epidemic.

Finally, don't miss **"North Country,"** a gritty, film about a courageous female mine worker (Charlize Theron) who faces—and overcomes—a lot of biases and unfair labor practices.

MMTA
METRO MANILA THEATERS ASSOCIATION
MOVIE GUIDE
NOW SHOWING

SHANG CINEPLEX
6th floor Shangrila Plaza EDSA corner Shaw Boulevard, Mandaluyong City
Telephone: 633.2227 / 6337851 loc. 171
1 (DOLBY) NANNY MCPHEE GP
2 (DOLBY) ULTRAVIOLET PG13
3 (DOLBY) SHE'S THE MAN PG13
4 (DOLBY) GLORY ROAD GP
PREMIERE
NORTH COUNTRY R13
(DOLBY) V FOR VENDETTA R13

Filinvest FESTIVAL CINEMA
(Muntinlupa) tel 850.3571 or 72
1 (DDS) SHAGGY DOG
2 (SDDS) FINAL DESTINATION
3 (DTS) SHE'S THE MAN
4 GOLD (DTS) V FOR VENDETTA
5 GOLD (DOLBY) NANNY MCPHEE
6 GOLD (SDDS) ULTRAVIOLET
7 GOLD (DOLBY) GLORY ROAD
8 HOSTEL
9 NORTH COUNTRY
10 16 BLOCKS

EASTWOOD CINEMAS
(Eastwood City Walk 2, Eastwood City E. Rodriguez Jr. Ave (C-5) Quezon City)
tel 687.6963 or 72
1 (DOLBY) GLORY ROAD
2 (DOLBY) ULTRAVIOLET
3 (DOLBY) NANNY MCPHEE
4 NORTH COUNTRY / V FOR VENDETTA

CINEMA 2000
Movie Theatres of the New Millenium

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383
1 CASANOVA
2 (DTS) BIG MOMMA'S HOUSE
3 (DOLBY) 16 BLOCKS
4 ST. ANGIE

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall
(Biñan) tel. (049) 4111146
1 ST. ANGIE
2 (DOLBY) BIG MOMMA'S HOUSE
3 (DTS) CASANOVA
4 16 BLACKS

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771
1 FEARLESS
2 DATE MOVIE
3 (DOLBY) 16 BLOCKS

Cinema 2000 Metrotown
(Tarlac) tel (045) 982.1729
1 DATE MOVIE
2 THE DESCENT
3 (DOLBY) CASANOVA
4 (DTS) AEON FLUX

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Plaridel) tel (044) 795.3320
1 V FOR VENDETTA
2 SAW-2
3 (DOLBY) SHAGGY DOG

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Gapan)
1 16 BLOCKS
2 DATE MOVIE

CINEMA 2000
Cinema 2000 Waltermart Makati
Waltermart Center, Chino Roces Ave. cor. Antonio Arnaiz Pio del Pilar, Makati City
Tel 816.4214 / 816.4216
1 V FOR VENDETTA
2 NANNY MCPHEE
3 GLORY ROAD
4 ULTRAVIOLET

Blue Wave MAR. UINTON
Sumulong Highway cor. Mayor Gil Fernando Street, Sto. Niño, Marikina City tel. 9341527
1 (DOLBY) GLORY ROAD
2 (DOLBY) NANNY MCPHEE
3 (DOLBY) ULTRAVIOLET
4 (DOLBY) RESERVED

SUPER CINERAMA
Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto
tel 7334228
1 (DOLBY) NORTH COUNTRY
2 ULTRAVIOLET
3 GLORY ROAD
4 NANNY MCPHEE
5 V FOR VENDETTA

starmall EDSA SHAW
(Mandaluyong) tel. 7266150
3 HOSTEL
4 (DOLBY DIGITAL EX) CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
5 ULTRAVIOLET

MARKETPLACE
Mandaluyong tel 533.3851 / 533.3856
1 HOSTEL
2 V FOR VENDETTA
3 PLEASE CALL
4 RESERVED

Masagana CINEMA 2000
(Pasay) tel 833.3290 / 833.3274
1 ULTRAVIOLET
2 V FOR VENDETTA
3 HOUSE OF FURY

metropolis star cinema
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(ALABANG) tel. 8504286, 5433994
1 HOUSE OF FURY
2 ULTRAVIOLET
3 VENDETTA
4 FINAL DESTINATION 3

Center Mall Cinema
Baguio Center Mall, Magsaysay Avenue (Baguio City) tel (074)- (4449346)
1 SHAGGY DOG
2 DATE MOVIE

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03
1 (DOLBY EX) 16 BLOCKS
2 CASANOVA
3 (DTS ES) FINAL DESTINATION
4 V FOR VENDETTA

Cine Nepo
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.0121
1 RESERVED
2 RESERVED
3 (DOLBY) RESERVED
4 (DTS) RESERVED

Cine Nepo
(Dagupan City) tel (075) 515.8489
1 16 BLOCKS
2 DATE MOVIE
3 (DOLBY) FEARLESS
4 THE DARK D/W HISTORY OF VIOLENCE

Centre Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007
1 BIG MOMMA'S HOUSE
2 FEARLESS

THEATRES
NE Pacific Mall Cabanatuan, telephone No. (044) 600-3025
1 16 BLOCKS
2 DATE MOVIE
3 FEARLESS

PACIFIC MALL LUCENA CINEMAGIC
Pacific Mall Lucena Tel (042) 060-5271
1 AEON FLUX
2 DATE MOVIE
3 RESERVED
4 RESERVED

Lianas Cinema
(Pasig) tel 640.4748
1 HOSTEL
2 EVIL EYE

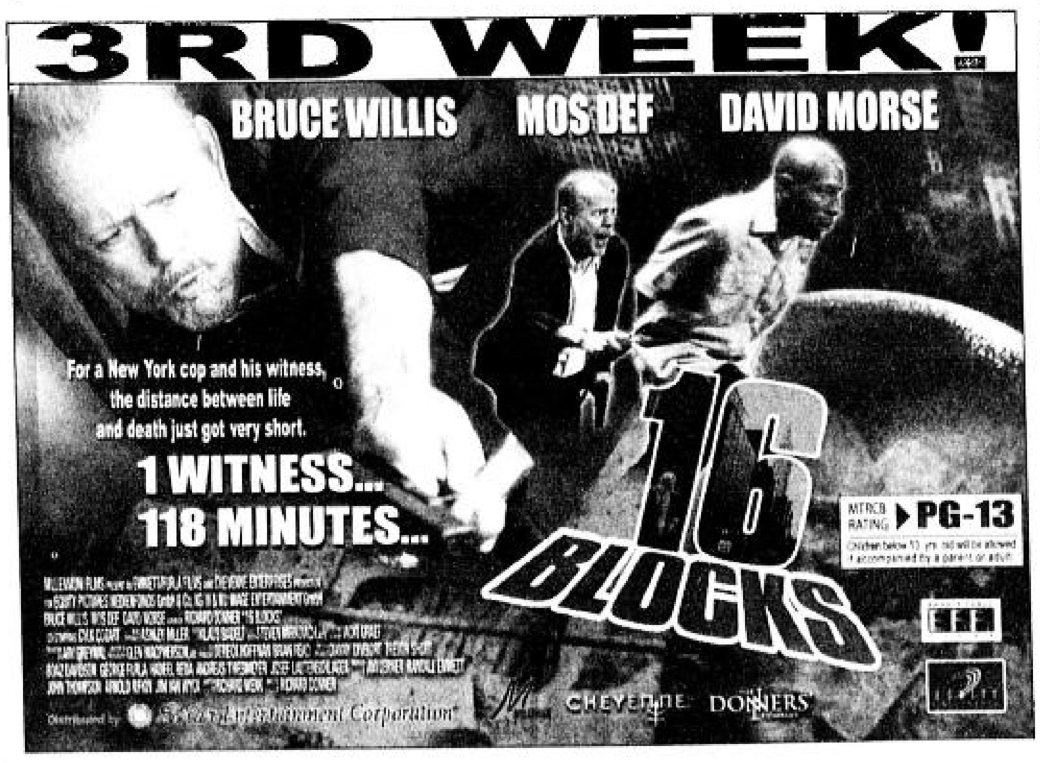
Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276
1 (SDDS) SNAKE CHARMER
2 RED ROSES
3 SANDAKOT NA KALIGAYAHAN
4 (DTS) PLEASE CALL

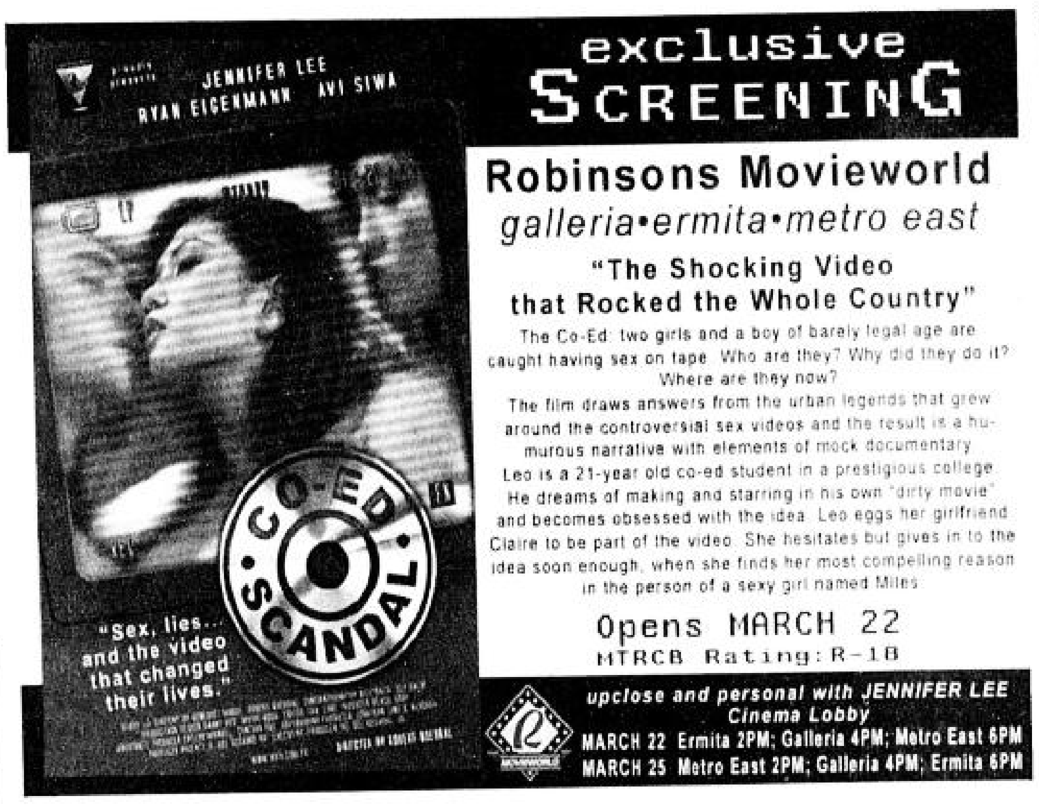
Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202
1 (DOLBY) 16 BLOCKS
2 BIG MOMMA'S HOUSE
3 (DTS) BIG MOMMA'S HOUSE
4 ST. ANGIE
5 CASANOVA

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790
1 UNANG TIKIM
2 CASANOVA
3 DATE MOVIE
4 SHAGGY DOG

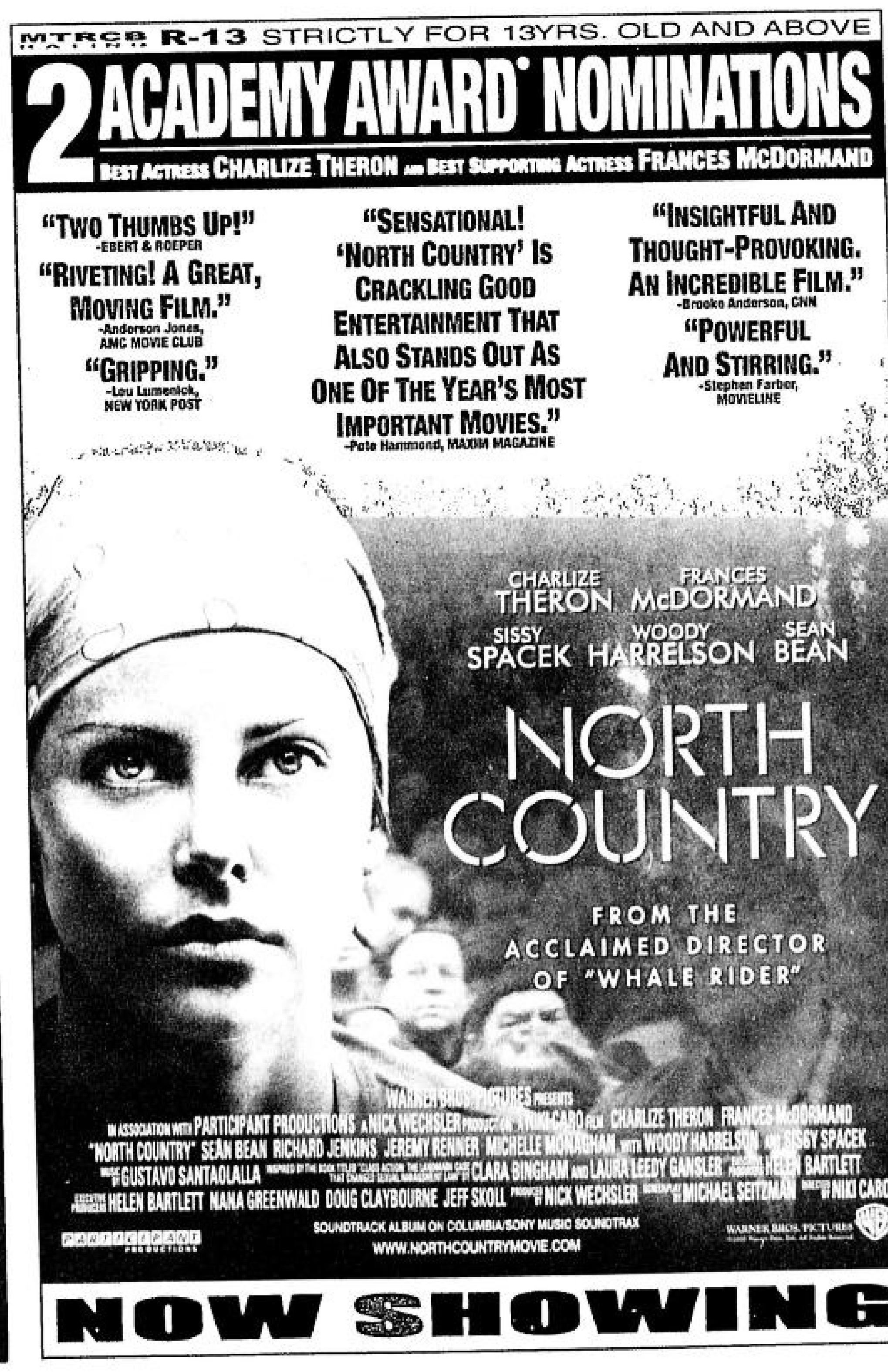
Berma Cinema
(Baclaran) tel 879.2030 / 879.2029
1 HOUSE OF FURY
2 CHECK IN

MOVIES / SCHEDULES / PRICES SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE


3RD WEEK!
BRUCE WILLIS
MOS DEF
DAVID MORSE
For a New York cop and his witness, the distance between life and death just got very short.
1 WITNESS... 118 MINUTES...
16 BLOCKS
MTRCB RATING PG-13
Distributed by Entertainment Corporation
CHEYENNE
DONNERS



exclusive SCREENING
Robinsons Movieworld
galleria•ermita•metro east
"The Shocking Video that Rocked the Whole Country"
The Co-Ed: two girls and a boy of barely legal age are caught having sex on tape. Who are they? Why did they do it? Where are they now?
The film draws answers from the urban legends that grew around the controversial sex videos and the result is a humurous narrative with elements of mock documentary.
Leo is a 21-year old co-ed student in a prestigious college. He dreams of making and starring in his own "dirty movie" and becomes obsessed with the idea. Leo eggs her girlfriend Claire to be part of the video. She hesitates but gives in to the idea soon enough, when she finds her most compelling reason in the person of a sexy girl named Miles.
Opens MARCH 22
MTRCB Rating: R-18
upclose and personal with JENNIFER LEE
Cinema Lobby
MARCH 22 Ermita 2PM; Galleria 4PM; Metro East 6PM
MARCH 25 Metro East 2PM; Galleria 4PM; Ermita 6PM


MTRCB RATING R-13 STRICTLY FOR 13YRS. OLD AND ABOVE
2 ACADEMY AWARD® NOMINATIONS
BEST ACTRESS CHARLIZE THERON AND BEST SUPPORTING ACTRESS FRANCES McDORMAND
"TWO THUMBS UP!" -EBERT & ROEPER
"RIVETING! A GREAT, MOVING FILM." -Anderson Jones, AMC MOVIE CLUB
"GRIPPING." -Lou Lumenick, NEW YORK POST
"SENSATIONAL! 'NORTH COUNTRY' IS CRACKLING GOOD ENTERTAINMENT THAT ALSO STANDS OUT AS ONE OF THE YEAR'S MOST IMPORTANT MOVIES." -Pete Hammond, MAXIM MAGAZINE
"INSIGHTFUL AND THOUGHT-PROVOKING. AN INCREDIBLE FILM." -Brooke Anderson, CNN
"POWERFUL AND STIRRING." -Stephen Farber, MOVIELINE
CHARLIZE THERON FRANCES McDORMAND
SISSY SPACEK WOODY HARRELSON SEAN BEAN
NORTH COUNTRY
FROM THE ACCLAIMED DIRECTOR OF "WHALE RIDER"
WARNER BROS. PICTURES
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WWW.NORTHCOUNTRYMOVIE.COM
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Celebrate EASTER with CHICKEN LITTLE at Discovery Suites
Be one of the 5 lucky winners of an overnight accommodation in a Junior Suite with breakfast at Discovery Suites and celebrate Easter Sunday and enjoy the exclusive Chicken Little Easter Party celebration.
VIVA

SATURDAY Special

NOW SHOWING

Woman power in two should-see films

"NANNY MCPHEE." Dark but delightful spin.

SHANG CINEPLEX

① NANNY MCPHEE
MTRCB: GP
12:20, 2:45, 5:10, 7:35, 10:00 LMF

② ULTRAVIOLET
MTRCB: PG-13
1:20, 3:30, 5:40, 7:50, 10:00 LMF

③ SHE'S THE MAN
MTRCB: PG-13
2:00, 4:25, 6:50, 9:15 LMF

④ GLORY ROAD
MTRCB: GP
2:00, 4:40, 7:20, 10:00 LMF

PREMIERE THEATRE NORTH COUNTRY / V FOR VENDETTA
MTRCB R-13 1:00, 7:00 / 4:00, 10:00
Movies and schedules are subject to change without prior notice.

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Starting March 20, MONDAY & TUESDAY
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Call 633-7851, loc. 171 or 633-2227
for more details.

Shangri-La Plaza

By Rito P. Asilo

"Nanny McPhee"

D: Kirk Jones
S: Emma Thompson, Colin Firth, Angela Lansbury

AFTER THE 17th NANNY OF widower Cedric Brown's (Colin Firth) seven ill-mannered children wails, "They've eaten the baby!," the beleaguered father finally acknowledges it's time for drastic measures:

Either he sends his kids away *or*, to keep his family intact, upon scurrilous Aunt Adelaide's (Angela Lansbury) increasingly distressing threats to cut off financial support, he *must* find a stepmother for his kids—in 30 days! Unfortunately, finding a suitable bride isn't as easy as sitting through endless reruns of "Mary Poppins" or "The Sound of Music."

When Nanny McPhee (Emma Thompson)—with bulbous nose, facial warts, an oversized incisor, a magical cane and horrendous fashion sense—mysteriously materializes at Cedric's doorstep to sort out his domestic troubles, things begin to change for the better.

But, who does he take to the altar: The beautiful but illiterate scullery maid (Kelly Macdonald) or the opportunistic but well-heeled Mrs. Quickly (Celia Imrie)? The kids—and their all-knowing nanny—have the answer.

Kirk Jones' heartwarming adaptation of Christianna Brand's "Nurse Matilda" books puts a surprisingly dark but delightful spin on the nanny-comes-to-the-rescue-of-motherless-children tale. It brims with predictable characters and their black-and-white motivations.

Unlike most children's tales, however, the main protagonist doesn't possess the cheery optimism and grace of the usual celluloid ingenue, like Maria von Trapp.

What elevate the story beyond its mushy and trite narrative are the winning performances of Thompson (who also wrote the screenplay), Firth, Imrie, Macdonald and, most notably, Lansbury—who's almost unrecognizable as the snooty aunt!

Yes, Nanny McPhee's magic can do so much to make this imperfect world a better and bearable place. But, as Cedric himself realizes, love and family are enough to beat life's neverending odds. In fact, sometimes, they're the *only* things that truly matter.

"North Country"

D: Niki Caro
S: Charlize Theron, Frances McDormand, Sissy Spacek, Sean Bean

Niki Caro delivers a rousing and empowering version of Lois Jenson's story. Jenson—fictionalized in the film as Josey Aimes—filed the first-ever class-action lawsuit for sexual harassment in American history.

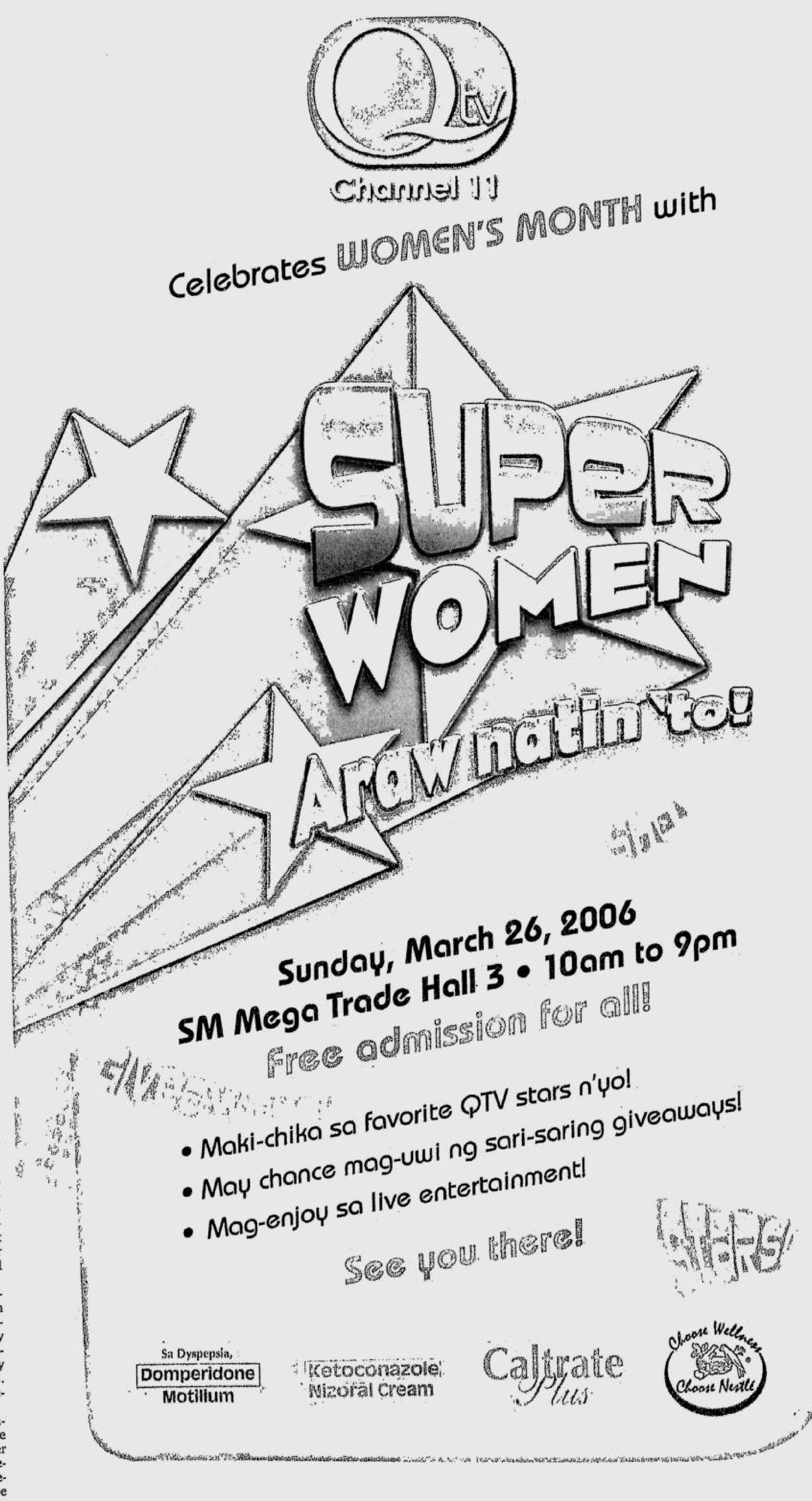
The circumstances surrounding the story are familiar: The wheels of justice turned grindingly slow, and the ensuing landmark court battle was settled 10 years after it was filed—more than 20 years *after* the harassments began! But, better late than never.

In the film, Josey (Charlize Theron) and her kids walked out of her abusive boyfriend and—since it paid six times more than hairdressing—she took a job at a Minnesota iron mine. She knew it wasn't going to be easy, but she didn't realize just how daunting it would be to work in a male-dominated profession, where female miners had to endure all forms of harassment from male co-workers.

Caro's follow-up to the exhilarating "Whale Rider" is an uneven mesh of narrative convolutions, schmaltz and two-dimensional characters. But, the film is nevertheless a should-see—an important cinematic experience that sends an important message about gender equality, female empowerment and political correctness. It seethes with fervor and passion.

Theron proves that her Oscar-winning performance in "Monster" was no fluke. In "North Country," she comes up with a textured characterization that is synergized by the stirring portrayals of her similarly-accomplished co-stars (Frances McDormand, Sissy Spacek, Sean Bean and Woody Harrelson). For these reasons alone, the production deserves to be patronized.

Josey's—or Lois', for that matter—accomplishment may have opened doors and broke down major barriers in the quest for gender equality, but so much remains to be done elsewhere in the world—where abusive and repressive conditions against women tend to be the norm rather than the exception.



Qtv
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SUPER WOMEN
Araw natin 'to!
Sunday, March 26, 2006
SM Mega Trade Hall 3 • 10am to 9pm
Free admission for all!
- Maki-chika sa favorite QTV stars n'yo!
- May chance mag-uwi ng sari-saring giveaways!
- Mag-enjoy sa live entertainment!

See you there!

Sa Dyspepsia, Domperidone Motilium
Ketoconazole Nizoral Cream
Caltrate Plus
Choose Wellness Choose Nestlé

Ali interviews Sharon

By Nestor U. Torre

SHARON CUNETA IS one of the most-interviewed stars in show biz. She's been grilled so often on TV and in print that we seem to know everything about her—in fact, perhaps even more than some of us would care to find out!

Talk show

So, when we heard that Ali Sotto was interviewing Sharon on her ABC-5 talk show last Tuesday, March 21, we were less than thrilled. Still, we made it a point to catch the show—and we're really glad we did, because it turned out that both Ali and Sharon had a lot more to offer than the usual Sharon Cuneta interview.

This was because, as the two women glowingly revealed, they were best friends when they were both starting out in show business—Sharon at 12, and Ali at 16. As best friends, of course, they knew much more about each other than the standard interviewer-interviewee tandem, and they proceeded to regale viewers with their choice recollections and insights.

They also brought the house down early in the interview when, in an inspired move, Ali "challenged" Sharon to do a hula number! The two friends proceeded to dance with grace, delight and *wahine* winsomeness. —What a spontaneous and unusual treat!

There was a lot of giggling and bantering, but Ali was also able to elicit some instructive insights from her stellar guest. Sharon revealed that her two major regrets in life were not completing her education, and marrying too early in life—not necessarily in that order!

Achiever

She further shared that growing up wasn't easy for her, because her dad had so many kids. She loved all of her siblings, but it was tough getting her father's attention. She now reflects that this could explain why she's been such an achiever all her life—to gain her dad's approval? Well, as everybody knows, she's done much more than that, so she can rest easy.

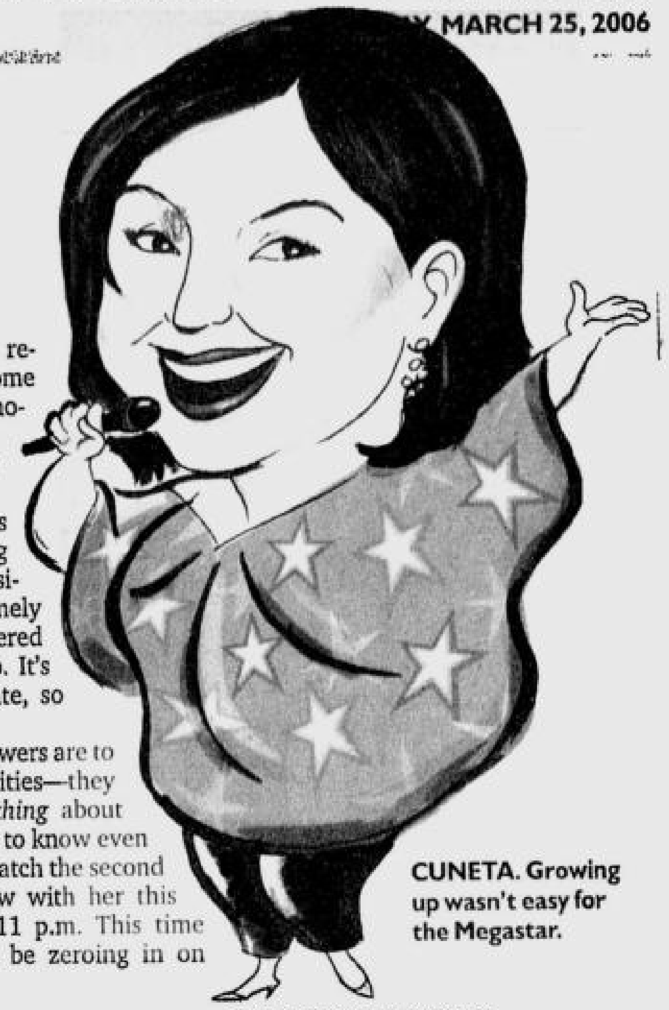
Sharon also reacted to people's comments about her added poundage, pointing out that she was 40 years old, for Pete's sakes, so it was rather insensitive for people to still expect her to look as svelte as a debutante!

Introspective moment

In an even more introspective moment, the Megastar revealed that she had some "private pains" that nobody knew about, and would be taking them to her grave.

Of course, viewers started speculating what they could possibly be—was she a lonely child, a battered wife—*what*? Oh, stop. It's supposed to be private, so please desist.

Well, that's how viewers are to their favorite celebrities—they want to know *everything* about them. So, if you want to know even more about Sharon, catch the second half of Ali's interview with her this coming Tuesday at 11 p.m. This time around, Sharon will be zeroing in on Kiko and the kids.



CUNETA. Growing up wasn't easy for the Megastar.

CARICATURE BY ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

'Thicker Than Water'

WAGNER, GILBERT AND BRIAN WIMMER. Star in Hallmark's family drama.

A TOUCHING FAMILY DRAMA COMES TO life on the Hallmark Channel at 9 p.m. on March 26. "Thicker Than Water" stars Melissa Gilbert ("Little House on the Prairie") as hotshot lawyer Natalie Jones.

Her life takes an unexpected turn when her father dies, leading to a disturbing discovery: She finds a faded photograph of her beloved father as a young man in an affectionate embrace with popular rodeo trick rider, Maggie May Jarrat.

Natalie soon learns that Maggie May was her first wife. Devastated, she tracks down the woman, only to find out that she has passed away. She then meets Maggie May's daughter, Jesse (Lindsay Wagner), who holds the key to the bittersweet secrets Natalie wants to uncover.

MONTAGE

Rudolf Golez

"A Mostly Mozart Evening" features acclaimed pianist, Rudolf Golez, on March 31 at the Francisco Santiago Hall in Makati. Russell Brandon, the "Listener's Guide," will provide explanations to enhance the audience's appreciation of the music. Repertoire includes Mozart sonatas, Chopin's Szherzo in C# minor op. 39 #3, and Paganini-Liszt's Etude in A minor.

Movies on TV

On HBO, March 25 at 5 p.m., "Back to the Future." 11:30 p.m., "The Boxer."

On Cinemax, March 25 at 1 p.m., "Something to Talk About." March 26 at 6:30 a.m., "All the President's Men."

New 'Spongebob' episodes

Last March 19, "Spongebob SquarePants" returned to the Nickelodeon channel, much to the relief of its young fans. With new episodes like "My Worst Friend's Wedding" and "Squidbob Tentaclepants," the show offers more quirky fun and adventure.

To celebrate Spongebob's return, Nickelodeon is giving away exclusive Spongebob loot for five weeks in the channel's Watch n Win contest.

Voice seminar at Mr C's

Learn to prevent voice problems and maximize the capacity of your voice for professional use in the special half-day seminar, "In Love with My Voice," at Ryan Cayabyab's The Music Studio today. Dr. Rebecca Feliciano and Kitchie Molina will conduct the seminar from 8 a.m. to 12 noon. Call 844-3330 or 0917 909-6484, or email info@ryancayabyabthemusicstudio.com.

'Bridget Jones: The Edge of Reason'

HBO screens "Bridget Jones: The Edge of Reason" at 8 p.m. on March 26. Reneé Zellweger and Hugh Grant reprise their roles in the original hit film.

Kuh Ledesma and Bobby Soul

Kuh Ledesma and Bobby Soul of The Platters wax nostalgic on April 1 as they perform yesterday's memorable romantic anthems together at the Mandarin's Captain's Bar. Call 721-6726 or 750-8888.

Kuh shares that the concert is her way of "keeping the Platters' music alive for future generations."

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	4 HOSTEL	5 GLORY ROAD	6 NORTH COUNTRY	7 V FOR VENDETTA
GB1 GREENBELT 1	1 ULTRAVIOLET	2 NORTH COUNTRY		
GB3 GREENBELT 3	1 THX ULTRAVIOLET GUARANTEED SEATS	2 THX NORTH COUNTRY GUARANTEED SEATS		
	3 GLORY ROAD GUARANTEED SEATS	4 V FOR VENDETTA GUARANTEED SEATS	5 NANNY MCPHEE GUARANTEED SEATS	
ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER	1 THX NORTH COUNTRY	2 NANNY MCPHEE		
	3 ULTRAVIOLET	4 SHE'S THE MAN	5 GLORY ROAD	
ACC AYALA CENTER CEBU	1 CASANOVA	2 LAST HOLIDAY	3 FINAL DESTINATION 3	4 SYRIANA
M2 MARKET! MARKET!	1 ULTRAVIOLET	2 NORTH COUNTRY		
	3 GLORY ROAD	4 NANNY MCPHEE	5 SHE'S THE MAN	

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The story of 'cool'

And how to 'get cool' without heating up your electricity bill

WE HAVE ALWAYS ASSOCIATED THE concept of air-conditioning with the Western world. In a way, that would be correct, since the first modern air-conditioning system using electricity was invented in Brooklyn, New York by Willis Haviland Carter in 1902.

But the air-conditioning system, which in our tropical context usually means refrigeration or cooling of indoor air temperatures, has actually been around for thousands of years in a part of the world where we expect air-conditioning to be really doing brisk business-in the desert climate of the Middle East.

According to the encyclopedia section of www.reference.com under "air-conditioning", "an earlier form of air conditioning was invented in Persia (Iran) thousands of years ago in the form of wind shafts on the roof, which caught the wind and passed it through water and blew the cooled air into the building."

But leave it to Westerners to complicate the process, and, ultimately, make the system more efficient, portable, and easier to use for the common citizen. According to reference.com, before Carrier's invention, "19th century British inventor Michael Faraday discovered that compressing and liquefying a certain gas could chill air."

Faraday's idea, however, remained largely theoretical, until the electrical version of air conditioning was finally invented by Carrier in 1902 to control temperature and humidity for improved manufacturing process control, and the first practical air-conditioning system for a printing plant in Brooklyn, New York.

"Later, expensive air conditioning systems were applied to increase productivity in the workplace. Later still, air conditioning use was expanded to improve comfort in homes and automobiles. Residential sales didn't take off until the 1950s."

The first air conditioners and refrigerators employed toxic gases like ammonia and methyl chloride, which resulted in fatal accidents when they leaked. Thomas Midgley Jr created the

COOL/ A4-4

Panasonic Air Conditioners:

The way to fight the invisible household enemy

WE USUALLY FIND OURSELVES SHUNNING the outdoors for fear of inhaling airborne viruses and bacteria. Overprotective mothers would rather lock their kids up inside their homes than get themselves dirty playing outdoors with their friends.

Very few of us, however, are aware that indoor air quality is actually fast becoming the world's top environmental health problem. In fact, the US Environmental Protection Agency found out that indoor air pollution is two to 10 times worse than outdoor.

Surprisingly, the EPA study also showed that air pollution levels in many well-insulated homes is even higher than the most polluted cities in the world. This is why a lot of people develop asthma and other respiratory diseases even when they stay indoors most of the time.

In the Philippines alone, about eight million Filipinos have respiratory problems and over six million children have asthma, making the Philippines the allergy capital of Asia. A nationwide study conducted by the University of Santo Tomas shows about 12.4 percent of children 14-15 years old are afflicted with asthma.

So how do you fight the invisible enemy in your household environment? Fortunately, Panasonic has come up with another bright idea that promotes reduction of sources of pollution while improving ventilation indoors through a new line of window and split type air conditioners.

The new Panasonic Air Conditioners now perform more than just cooling because they are developed with the Super Alleru-Buster Filter technology that employs three functional materials to deactivate various harmful elements such as Anti-allergen for Pollen and Dust mites, Anti-Virus and Bio-Elimination for Bacteria and mould.

Another good news is, the Panasonic Window Type Air Conditioner has a very high Energy Efficiency Rating (EER) at 11.7. Government regulation for EER is at least at 9.3 kJ/Wh for 12,000 BtU/hr and below and 8.8kJ/Wh for 12,000 BtU/hr and above.

Panasonic Air Conditioners also have a Super Quiet feature that is as low as 39 decibels, producing lesser noise than a quiet library which is 40 decibels. This was made possible through a redesign of the air inlet to the turbo fan which greatly reduces wind-shear noise as well as the reinforcing of sound insulation.

Breakthrough innovation

The Split Type Air Conditioner, meanwhile, introduces the unique Auto Filter Cleaning feature-a break-through innovation in the cooling industry. The auto cleaning system works exactly like the conventional filter cleaning method of sweeping, vacuuming and discarding the filtered dust but without the physical effort-a technological advancement that makes it hassle-free for you and your family.

Another feature of the Split Type Air Conditioner is the Supersonic AP System with auto refresh deodorizer that keeps indoor air-fresh and odor-free.

We cannot undermine the importance of cleaning the filters if we want to avoid problems such as lower air volume and air con efficiency, increased noise, and unpleasant odors.

With the new Panasonic Air Conditioners, your family will not just stay cool as the temperature starts to heat up for summer, they will stay safe and healthy too. Truly making your family experience a feeling that's more than cool, more than clean.

Panasonic
ideas for life
Automatically cleans itself.
True idea

More than cool. More than clean. Panasonic Air Conditioners. No more troublesome filter cleaning with the Panasonic Split type XC Series' **Auto Clean Robot!** It automatically cleans the filter so it keeps functioning like it's new and mantains the unit's energy-saving performance. You get nothing but cool, clean, healthy air for your family.

The pad on the nozzle rubs the dust from the filter mesh.

The trapped dust is then vacuumed and exhausted through the vacuum duct.

Pad: The brush rubs dust from the filter.

Suction port: The rubbed off dust is vacuumed.

Self-cleaning function mantains its original airflow volume as when it was brand new.

No filter maintenance will cause air volume to drop 25% in 1 year, 50% in 3 years

CS/U - XC9EKQ
CS/U - XC12EKQ

- High EER (Energy Efficiency Ratio) As high as 12.6 kJ/Wh
- Super Quiet - As low as 23dB
- 5-year Warranty on Compressor

AC Robot

www.panasonic.com.ph

The story of 'cool'

From page A4-3

> When buying a new room air conditioner, look for units with an EER of 10.0 or above. Check the EnergyGuide label for the unit, and also look for room air conditioners with the Energy Star label

first chlorofluorocarbon gas, dubbed Freon in 1928. The refrigerant proved much safer for humans but not for the atmosphere's ozone layer. Freon, now known as R-22, will be phased out for use in new equipment by 2010 and completely discontinued by 2020.

The room air conditioner

Perhaps nothing is more iconic of Western air-conditioning than the typical room air-conditioner. According to the US Department of Energy's Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy website, room air conditioners, sometimes referred to as window air conditioners, cool rooms rather than the entire home or business. If they provide cooling only where they're needed, room air conditioners are less expensive to operate than central units, even though their efficiency is generally lower than that of central air conditioners.

Smaller room air conditioners (i.e., those drawing less than 7.5 amps of electricity) can be plugged into any 15- or 20-amp, 115-volt household circuit that is not shared with any other major appliances. Larger room air conditioners (i.e., those drawing more than 7.5 amps) need their own dedicated 115-volt circuit. The largest models require a dedicated 230-volt circuit.

Energy efficiency

Also according to the US Department of Energy, a room air conditioner's efficiency is measured by the energy efficiency ratio (EER). The EER is the ratio of the cooling capacity (in British thermal units-Btu-per hour) to the power input (in watts). The higher the EER rating, the more efficient the air conditioner. National appliance standards require room air conditioners built after Jan. 1, 1990, to have an energy efficiency ratio (EER) of 8.0 or greater.

The Association of Home Appliance Manufacturers reports that the average EER of room air conditioners rose 47 percent from 1972 to 1991. If you own a 1970s-vintage room air conditioner with an EER of 5 and you replace it with a new one with an EER of 10, you will cut your air conditioning energy costs in half.

When buying a new room air conditioner, look for units with an EER of 10.0 or above. Check the EnergyGuide label for the unit, and also look for room air conditioners with the Energy Star label.

Sizing and selecting

The required cooling capacity for a room air conditioner depends on the size of the room being cooled: Room air conditioners generally have cooling capacities that range from 5,500 Btu per hour to 14,000 Btu per hour. A common rating term for air conditioning size is the "ton," which is 12,000 Btu per hour.

Proper sizing is very important for efficient air conditioning. A bigger unit is not necessarily better because a unit that is too large will not cool an area uniformly. A small unit running for an extended period operates more efficiently and is more effective at dehumidifying than a large unit that cycles on and off too frequently.

Based on size alone, an air conditioner generally needs 20 Btu for each square foot of living space. Other important factors to consider when selecting an air conditioner are room height, local climate, shading, and window size.

Verify that your home's electrical system can meet the unit's power requirements. Room units operate on 115-volt or 230-volt circuits. The standard household receptacle is a connection for a 115-volt branch circuit. Large room units rated at 115 volts may require a dedicated circuit and room units rated at 230 volts may require a special circuit.

If you are mounting your air conditioner near the corner of a room, look for a unit that can direct its airflow in the desired direction for your room layout. If you need to mount the air conditioner at the narrow end of a long room, then look for a fan control known as "Power Thrust" or "Super Thrust" that sends the cooled air farther into the room.

Other features to look for: A filter that slides out easily for regular cleaning; logically arranged controls; a digital readout for the thermostat setting, and; a built-in timer.

Installing, operating

A little planning before installing your air conditioner will save you energy and money. The unit should be level when installed, so that the inside drainage system and other mechanisms operate efficiently. If possible, install the unit in a shaded spot on your home's north or east side. Direct sunshine on the unit's outdoor heat exchanger decreases efficiency by as much as 10 percent. You can plant trees and shrubs to shade the air conditioner, but do not block the airflow.

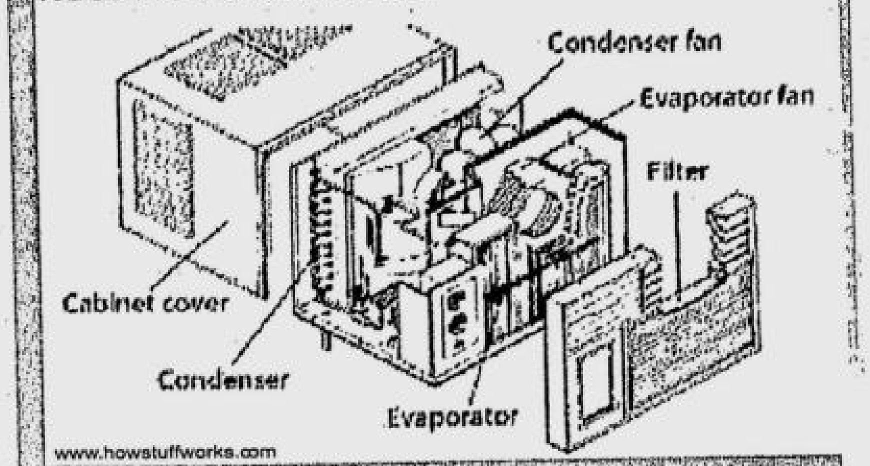
Don't place lamps or television sets near your air-conditioner's thermostat. The thermostat senses heat from these appliances, which can cause the air conditioner to run longer than necessary.

Set your air conditioner's thermostat as high as is comfortably possible in the summer. The less difference between the indoor and outdoor temperatures, the lower your overall cooling bill will be. Don't set your thermostat at a colder setting than normal when you turn on your air conditioner; it will not cool your home any faster and could result in excessive cooling and unnecessary expense.

Set the fan speed on high, except on very humid days. When humidity is high, set the fan speed on low for more comfort. The low speed on humid days will cool your home better and will remove more moisture from the air because of slower air movement through the cooling equipment.

Consider using an interior fan in conjunction with your window air conditioner to spread the cooled air more effectively through your home without greatly increasing electricity use.

Room Air Conditioner



www.howstuffworks.com

A ROOM air conditioner features a condenser on the end that faces the outside and a condenser fan behind it that blows air through it, helping to remove the heat from the condenser. On the end that faces the room is the evaporator with an evaporator fan behind that to push the cool air into the room. The filter is mounted in the front grill.

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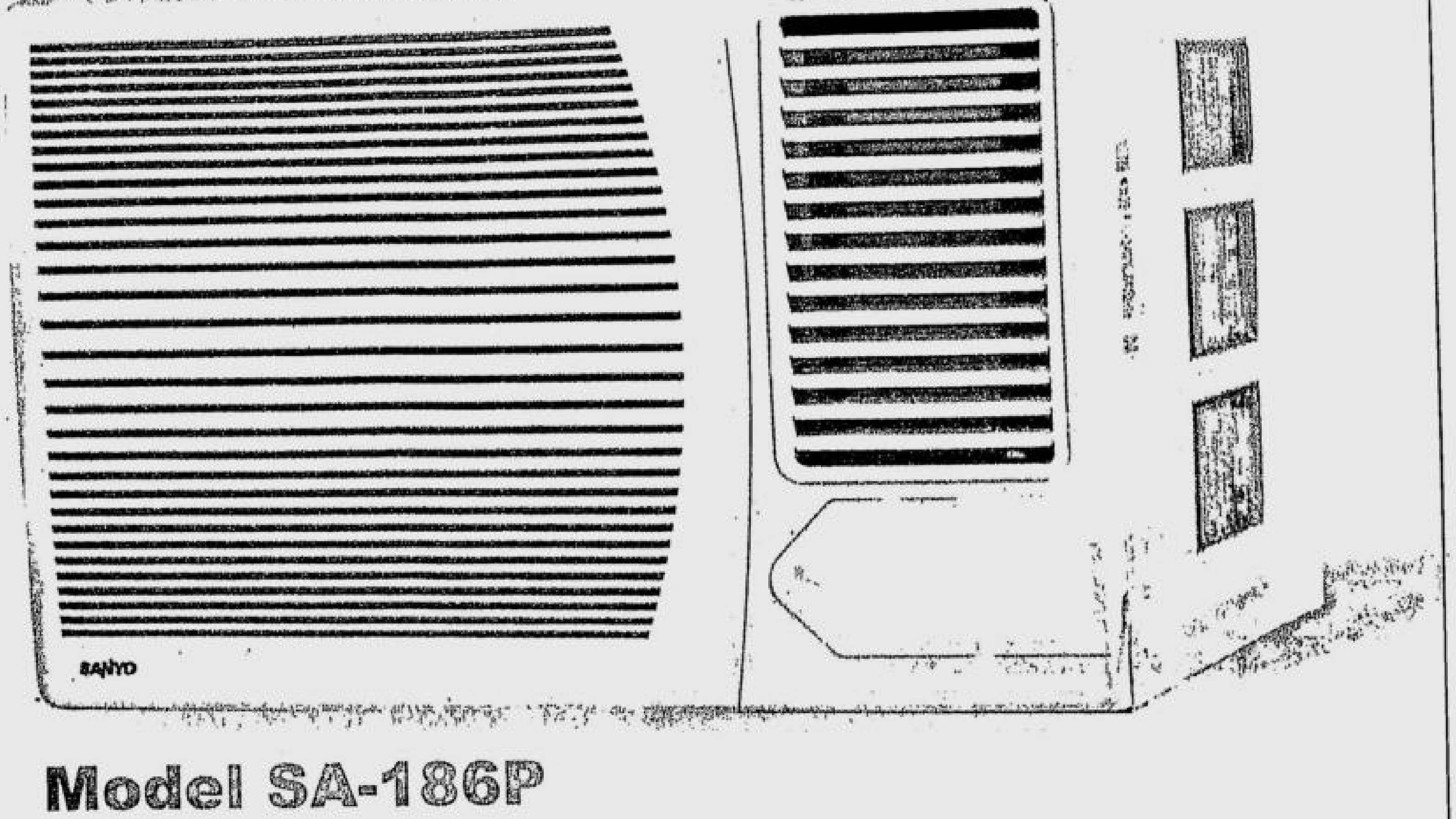

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MAGBAYAD NG TAMANG BUWIS
bago ang April 17 deadline.
23 DAYS TO GO
Ang Ating Kontribusyon Sa Solusyon

BUSINESS

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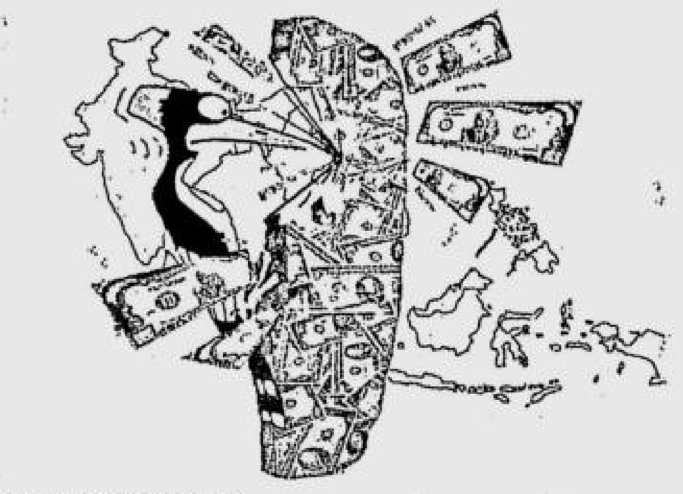
Gov't hikes '05 trade gap figure by 58%

INQUIRER MONITOR

Figures that matter in our nation's life

Economic Costs of Avian Flu (2006)

According to studies conducted by the Asian Development Bank, the lingering psychological effects of the bird flu scare in Asia would most adversely affect China, which could lose $80.6 billion in consumption, trade and investment. The Philippines would be least affected, with losses expected to reach $2.5 billion. The country is also expected to post losses in labor productivity, roughly pegged at $300 million, due to incapacity and mortality in the workforce.



Source: Asian Development Bank
Policy Brief on the Potential Economic Impact of an Avian Flu Pandemic on Asia
Kate Pedroso PDI Research

Investors dismayed by 'substantial' revision

THE PHILIPPINES RAISED ITS 2005 TRADE DEFICIT BY 58 PERcent yesterday in a revision that disappointed investors already dismayed by a doubling of the trade shortfall in January this year to $415 million.

The Philippines, which also revised its trade figures in 2002, 2003 and 2004, said its final trade deficit last year was $6.16 billion compared to an earlier figure of $3.9 billion after late data showing higher imports was included.

The National Statistics Office (NSO) said in a statement final imports last year were $47.42 billion from an earlier report of $44.91 billion.

Financial investors have grown accustomed to periodic revisions of Philippine data but the scale of Friday's amendment surprised them.

"It's quite disappointing. It's up substantially," George Worthington, chief economist for Asia-Pacific at IFR Thomson Financial, said. "It's pretty worrying given the list of the imports against the exports."

Exports in 2005 were revised to $41.26 billion from a preliminary report of $41.01 billion.

Earlier, the Philippines reported a 5-percent jump in January 2006 imports to $3.68 billion due to higher purchases of energy products. The increase resulted in a trade deficit of $415 million compared to $207 million in January last year.

Analysts said the shortfall, which included an 8-percent drop in imports of electronic parts, assembled into finished products for export, indicated weaker growth prospects

GOV'T/ B2

INDICATORS

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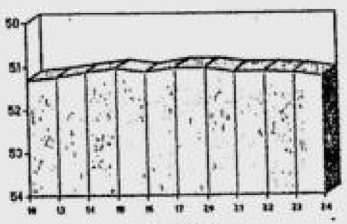

₱51.26 = $1
As of 5 p.m., March 24, 2006

¥118.06 = $1
As of 5 p.m., March 24, 2006

GOLD: $549.60-550
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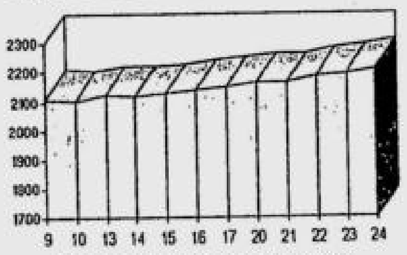
STOCK MARKET



(See stock market report on Page B4)

Shares close higher

SHARE PRICES CLOSED 0.7-PERCENT HIGHER yesterday, extending gains to fresh six-year highs led by support for index heavyweight, Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co., dealers said.

Foreign investors continued to buy more shares, encouraged by the improving economic and fiscal outlook for the Philippines, they said.

The Philippine Stock Exchange composite index rose 15.35 points at 2,208.13 after

SHARES/ B2

JAPANESE INVESTORS' SURVEY

RP remains an attractive investment site

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE PHILIPPINES REMAINS AN attractive destination for investments from Japan due to its relatively lower total labor cost, according to a yearly survey by the Japan External Trade Organization.

Jetro's 16th Survey of Investment-related Cost Comparison in Major Cities and Regions in Asia showed that Japanese firms would still choose the country over its Asian neighbors because of the minimum monthly wage and lower social security burden ratio.

The social security cost ratio is a comparison between employers' spending on pension as well as medical and employment insurance, and the monthly wage paid out to employees.

Hiroshi Yoneyama, Jetro Manila's director for research, said the survey was done between November and December 2005 and covered 26 cities in 15 economies in South Asia, Southeast Asia, and East Asia.

Jetro's survey covered two Philippine cities—Manila and Cebu.

The 26 cities were benchmarked against the Japanese cities of Okinawa and Yokohama using the following indicators that were compared in terms of American dollars: wages, land prices, office rent, telecommunication expenses, and public utilities.

Jetro explained that the data for the study was obtained "by interviewing several selected Japanese manufacturing companies" or collected through local governments and related companies.

But Yoneyama said one factor that affected the competitiveness of the Philippines was the higher price of electricity.

The study showed that Philippine costs for monthly minimum

RP STILL/ B2

WHAT'S INSIDE

P8-B SLEX rehab finally underway /B4

SuperFerry cuts fares to spur local travel /B10

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Sweat dreams

BREAKTIME

Conrado R. Banal III

BANCO DE ORO PRESIDENT NESTOR Tan, according to reports, said that his bank was still waiting for the response of Equitable PCI Bank to BDO's famous "merger" proposal.

The reports did not say, however, if Tan, known in business as one of the loyal vassals in the mall business empire of Henry Sy, was still in bed when he made the statement to media.

It seemed that Tan was somewhere in sweet dreamland, at least to those in the wide awake stock market, on which both BDO and EPCIB are listed.

For one, the market price of EPCIB shares has soared, indicating the market now expects that, if any deal will happen in EPCIB, it will involve CASH.

Hey, that simply means it is not—as in "negative, no way, never"—going to be any "merger" or "takeover." It has to be a "buyout." You know—involving cash! Quick! Somebody please nudge our good friend, Nestor.

***

INVESTORS in stocks are such that they buy up an issue like EPCIB, thus pushing up its price, only if they expect to make real money eventually.

Now, the run-up of EPCIB shares did not happen because of the "merger" proposal from BDO.

On the contrary, it became spirited only when GSIS president and general manager Winston Garcia announced that he had a ready, willing and able buyer for the GSIS holdings in the bank at a rather fantastic price of P95 a share.

In comparison, the EPCIB shares were hovering at the P60s level for the past several weeks of market uptrend, and around the P70s at present.

All right, talk in the market has it that, for the past couple of months, some groups had been trying to depress the price of EPCIB shares.

Insiders said that those groups had been throwing EPCIB shares at each other, with the price going down after every transaction.

In short, it was price manipulation! And it forced Garcia to threaten the groups with court suits if they continued to bring down the price of EPCIB shares.

From what I heard, the groups had some big sounding names, some giant financial institutions from Europe, one with a name that sounded German and another that sounded Swiss.

***

NO WONDER then that now that the tables have turned, some people (who might or might not have been set loose by the jilted SM group) accuse Cebu hometown boy Garcia of trying to cheer up the EPCIB issue.

In effect, the loose talk put the Garcia factor, at least as far as the EPCIB issue was concerned, in the realm of the speculative. You know—much like a dream!

And so, Garcia retorted that if guys like BDO's Tan thought that he was only bluffing, he was willing to buy BDO's shares in EPCIB—all of them—at the prevailing market price.

It means Garcia still expects GSIS to make money. That is, if Garcia really has a buyer at P95 per.

If it is another bluff, BDO's Nestor Tan should call it, right?

Eventually, you see, the public (including the millions of members of both GSIS and SSS) will get to see the cards of Garcia and BDO.

As this EPCIB "takeover" drama unfolds, more will be revealed to the public. It is the scheme of things in business. You cannot keep secrets forever.

***

AND THAT, my dear GSIS and SSS members, even the SSS commission now realizes.

The government-managed pension fund of the working class, according to insiders, has effectively decided to reject the rape, *este*, the "merger" (i.e. "takeover") proposal from the SM group.

Only the other day, the commission en banc decided that the fund should join the GSIS in selling the shares in EPCIB to Garcia's still-secret buyer.

WHAAAAT—NO BIDDING?

Anyway, the SSS commission wants to sit down with the buyer, while the SSS tries to squirm out of the court cases it got its own EPCIB shares caught into.

Remember, dear members, those cases stemmed from—what else—the same advances of the passionate SM group toward the EPCIB shares of the SSS.

When this cute administration of Gloriaetta came to power, the SSS under its present president Corazon de la Paz agreed to sell the shares to the SM group at a bargain! The deal naturally attracted court suits.

And so right at this moment, the decision of the SSS commission is for the pension fund to get CASH—and not, in the words of a commissioner, "toilet paper."

Okay, let's not sweat it; just tell me where does the SSS decision put the "merger" proposal of BDO? In dreamland?

GIR to breach $20-B mark in 2006, BSP official says

Level enough to cover four months worth of imports

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE BANGKO SENTRAL NG PILIPINAS expects the Philippines to end the year with over $20 billion in gross international reserves, up from $18.5 billion in 2005.

According to Iluminada Sicat, BSP director for research, the $20 billion to $21 billion in GIR would be enough to cover four months worth of imported goods and services.

The country's foreign exchange reserves already hit a new record high of $20.58 billion at the end of last month on strong inflows, primarily due to foreign borrowings.

The GIR outlook was also in line with expectations of a strong balance of payments position, following an increase in exports and remittances from overseas Filipino workers.

The GIR—consisting of the BSP's gross foreign currency holdings, gold reserves, special drawing rights from multilateral institutions and foreign investments— indicate the country's ability to service the foreign exchange requirements of the economy for imports and debt servicing.

On the other hand, the BOP accounts for the foreign exchange transactions between the domestic economy and the rest of the world.

"To gauge the fundamental strength of an economy, the level of foreign exchange reserves is a better indicator than the exchange rate," said University of Asia and the Pacific economist Victor Abola, "the amount of reserves a country has point to its ability to absorb external shocks."

But Abola warned that the peso's sharp appreciation would result in lower economic output.

He said the strong peso was also extracting a heavy toll among OFWs and exporters who receive less pesos for the foreign currency they earn.

Keeping a safe buffer, the economist noted, was one of the bitter lessons of the financial crisis of 1997-98.

Since then, he said countries started to accumulate foreign reserves as a precautionary measure against an unexpected outflow of capital.

"We should then use much of the OFW remittances to build up our reserves to at least six months, initially, and up to 12 months by 2009, maintain a competitive exchange rate, and let our central bank pay off its dollar debts," Abola said.

Aboitiz unit ties up with SN Power

By Abigail L. Ho

ABOITIZ EQUITY VENTURES (AEV) unit Aboitiz Power Corp. has formed a joint venture with SN Power Holding Singapore, a unit of Norway's SN Power Invest AS, to bid for some of the National Power Corp.'s hydropower assets.

In a statement issued yesterday, the partnership, SN Aboitiz Power (SNAP), said it would bid for the 360-megawatt (MW) Magat hydropower facility in Isabela and the 100-MW Pantabangan and 12-MW Masiway assets in Nueva Ecija.

SNAP said it had already met the initial requirements that the Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp. (PSALM) set for the bidding.

"We are anxious to see the privatization process move forward quickly. By submitting the consortium declaration before an announced official deadline, we are signaling the seriousness of our intent as a bidder, provided the privatization process can be expedited," said SNAP senior executive Luiz Miguel Aboitiz.

PSALM intends to sell the Magat and Pantabangan-Masiway facilities within the year.

SNAP said it hoped to contribute to "the positive and sustainable development of the energy sector in the Philippines" by bringing together "the best of local and international hydropower and investment experience."

Aboitiz Power parent firm AEV announced in July last year that it had formed a partnership with Norway's SN Power to jointly bid for and develop the Napocor hydropower assets that had been lined up for privatization.

The Aboitiz Group, through wholly owned subsidiary Hydroelectric Development Corp. (Hedcor), is now the country's largest mini-hydro development firm, controlling more than P3.3 billion worth of hydropower generation assets, including 19 generating facilities in Benguet and Davao with 113 MW of total installed capacity.

Hedcor was also the first company to win the bidding for a Napocor asset.

In March 2004, the firm won the auction for the 3.5-MW Talomo mini-hydro facility in Davao for $1.37 million.

The Aboitiz group has since expressed interest in bidding for more Napocor hydropower assets in the future.

Apart from the Magat and Pantabangan-Masiway facilities, Napocor hydroelectric power facilities that have been lined up for privatization include the 75-MW Ambuklao and the 100-MW Binga in Benguet, the 108-MW Aplaya in Misamis Oriental, the 0.8-MW Amlan in Negros Oriental, and the 246-MW Angat in Bulacan.

SN Power and its international subsidiaries develop, invest in and operate power generation facilities on a long-term basis, with focus on hydropower in selected markets in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

RP still an attractive investment site

From page B1

wage for workers, basic charge for landline telephones and mobile phones, corporate electricity rates, container transport, gasoline and diesel prices, and corporate income tax were higher than those in Chinese and South Asian cities.

On the other hand, Philippine rates were competitive in terms of monthly office rent and housing rent for foreigners.

Yasutomi Ota, Jetro Manila executive director, said the results of the survey were similar with those of a study conducted by the Japanese Chamber of Commerce and Industry that were publicized earlier.

"Generally, Japanese companies are concerned about the legal minimum wage, corporate income tax and adequacy of infrastructure in the Philippines," Ota said.

"Although those of us who are working here know better, corporate executives based in Japan have a relatively negative perception about the country's peace and order situation and political instability," Ota added.

He said further that although the minimum wage was relatively higher in the Philippines, companies could hire more workers at the basic pay rate.

Ota said this made the country more attractive to Japanese investors compared to economies where the legal minimum wage was lower but where few workers would accept basic rates.

Gov't ...

From page B1

for 2006. Beyond electronic parts, the Philippines also imports crude oil, machinery, transport equipment, iron, steel and textiles.

Exporters, who account for about 40 percent of Philippine output, have complained that a stronger peso, up around 9 percent since the end of 2004, is hitting their profit margins and competitiveness.

President Macapagal-Arroyo, who is banking on the economy growing between 5.7 percent and 6.3 percent this year, has promised to offer cheap financing to exporters to improve their earnings.

The Philippine economy grew 5.1 percent last year. *Reuters*

Shares ...

From page B1

moving between 2,192.78 and 2,211.63. It was the index's best closing level since Aug. 27, 1999, when it finished at 2,221.24.

The all-shares index rose 7.34 points to 1,061.47.

Gainers overwhelmed losers 74 to 28, with 50 stocks unchanged. Volume was 1.27 billion shares worth P1.77 billion.

"A big part of our gains is due to foreign buying and we've been seeing this since late last year. What's also worth noting is that the daily value turnover has improved to over a billion pesos," said Lawrence de Leon of Accord Capital Equities Corp.

"These are indications of the optimism that the Philippine economy will do better this year," he said, noting that the main index breached the 2,200 resistance amid hefty volume. *AFP*

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NUEVA ECIJA

CABANATUAN
LOT 1 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT
L.A.: 299sqm. F.A.: 135sqm.
Lot 3973-B-3-B-2-C-5-D Subd. Road, No. 15, Kalikid Sur,
Minimum Bid Price: 994,860.00
LOT 2 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT
L.A.: 1,141sqm.
Lot 4 Arenas St., Brgy. Mayapyap,
Minimum Bid Price: 692,800.00
LOT 3 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT
L.A.: 268sqm.
Lot 50 #271 Brgy. Kalikid Sur,
Minimum Bid Price: 171,000.00
LOT 4 - VACANT LOT
L.A.: 311sqm.
Lot 1556-A-2-M, Existing Road, Brgy. Samon,
Minimum Bid Price: 66,087.50
LOT 5 - VACANT LOT
L.A.: 739sqm.
Lot 1863-B Undeveloped Road, N.S. Garcia,
Minimum Bid Price: 531,900.00
LOT 6 - VACANT LOT
L.A.: 180sqm.
Lot 44 Blk. 9 #74 Apo St., Mabini Homesite,Brgy. Paludpod,
Minimum Bid Price: 324,000.00
LOT 7 - VACANT LOT
L.A.: 317sqm.
Lot 3973-B-3-B-2-C-5-N Prov'l. Road, No. 15, Kalikid Sur,
Minimum Bid Price: 333,887.00
LOT 8 - VACANT LOT
L.A.: 305sqm.
Lot 10Brgy. Rd., Palalac,
Minimum Bid Price: 32,300.00
LOT 9 - VACANT LOT
L.A.: 207sqm.
Lot 4 Blk 14 Ireneville Subd., San Isidro,
Minimum Bid Price: 242,100.00
LOT 10 - VACANT LOT
L.A.: 240sqm.
Lot 28 Blk. 23, 9Th St., Blk. 23 Kpp. Papa Subd.,
Minimum Bid Price: 592,800.00
LOT 11 - VACANT LOT
L.A.: 324sqm.
Lot 7 Prov.Rd. Brgy.Bantug
Minimum Bid Price: 1,231,200
LOT 12 - VACANT LOT
L.A.: 467sqm.
Lot 1886-E-8 Alley, Brgy. Padre Crisostomo,
Minimum Bid Price: 294,300.00

GAPAN
LOT 13 - VACANT LOT
L.A.: 586+405+585+372=1948 sqm.
Lot 2, 3922, 1, 3926 Brgy. San Lorenzo Poblacion, Gapan City,
Minimum Bid Price: 6,063,000

GEN. NATIVIDAD
LOT 14 - VACANT LOT
L.A.: 960sqm.
Lot 124 Brgy. Malaas Na Kahoy, Gen. Natividad,
Minimum Bid Price: 244,800.00
LOT 15 - VACANT LOT
L.A.: 299.60 sqm.
Lot 3537-A-9 Brgy. Malaas Na Kahoy, Gen. Natividad,
Minimum Bid Price: 38,199.00
LOT 16 - VACANT LOT
L.A.: 320.50 sqm.
Lot 3537-A-1 Brgy. Malaas Na Kahoy, Gen. Natividad,
Minimum Bid Price: 40,863.75
LOT 17 - VACANT LOT
L.A.: 299.60 sqm.
Lot 3537-A-8 Brgy. Malaas Na Kahoy, Gen. Natividad,
Minimum Bid Price: 38,199.00
LOT 18 - VACANT LOT
L.A.: 299.70 sqm.
Lot 3537-A-14 Brgy. Malaas Na Kahoy, Gen. Natividad,
Minimum Bid Price: 38,211.75
LOT 19 - VACANT LOT
L.A.: 299.60 sqm.
Lot 3537-A-5 Brgy. Malaas Na Kahoy, Gen. Natividad,
Minimum Bid Price: 38,199.00

GUIMBA
LOT 20 - LOT WITH MAKESHIFT IMPROVEMENT
L.A.: 321sqm.
Lot 1296-Bint.P.Ramos St.
Minimum Bid Price: 46,200.00
LOT 21 - VACANT LOT
L.A.: 31,914sqm.
Lot No. 3782 Brgy. Kulong
Minimum Bid Price: 136,000.00

LUPAO
LOT 22 - VACANT LOT
L.A.: 47,580sqm.
Lot 2100 Brgy. Sto Domingo
Minimum Bid Price: 156,000.00

MUNOZ
LOT 23 - VACANT LOT
L.A.: 783sqm.
Lot 1672-J Maharlika Hway
Minimum Bid Price: 997,900.00

PENARANDA
LOT 24 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT
L.A.: 7,758sqm.
Lot 3588 Parada St., San Josef
Minimum Bid Price: 701,400.00

RIZAL
LOT 25 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT
L.A.: 300sqm.
Lot 13 Blk 2 Brgy. Estrella
Minimum Bid Price: 48,000.00
LOT 26 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT
L.A.: 300sqm.
Lot 14 Blk 2 Brgy. Estrella
Minimum Bid Price: 48,000.00
LOT 27 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT
L.A.: 312sqm.
Lot 15 Blk 2 Brgy. Estrella
Minimum Bid Price: 49,920.00
LOT 28 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT
L.A.: 300sqm.
Lot 6 Blk 1 Brgy. Estrella
Minimum Bid Price: 48,000.00
LOT 29 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT
L.A.: 300sqm.
Lot 5 Blk 2 Brgy. Estrella
Minimum Bid Price: 48,000.00
LOT 30 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT
L.A.: 300sqm.
Lot 6 Blk 2 Brgy. Estrella
Minimum Bid Price: 48,000.00
LOT 31 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT
L.A.: 300sqm.
Lot 10 Blk 2 Brgy. Estrella
Minimum Bid Price: 48,000.00
LOT 32 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT
L.A.: 300sqm.
Lot 5 Blk 3 Brgy. Estrella
Minimum Bid Price: 48,000.00
LOT 33 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT
L.A.: 300sqm.
Lot 8 Blk 3 Brgy. Estrella
Minimum Bid Price: 48,000.00
LOT 34 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT
L.A.: 300sqm.
Lot 10 Blk 3 Brgy. Estrella
Minimum Bid Price: 48,000.00
LOT 35 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT
L.A.: 300sqm.
Lot 12 Blk 3 Brgy. Estrella,
Minimum Bid Price: 48,000.00
LOT 36 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT
L.A.: 315sqm.
Lot 18 Blk 2 Brgy. Estrella
Minimum Bid Price: 50,400.00
LOT 37 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT
L.A.: 323sqm.
Lot 13 Blk 3 Brgy. Estrella
Minimum Bid Price: 52,000.00
LOT 38 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT
L.A.: 292sqm.
Lot 1 Blk 3 Brgy. Estrella
Minimum Bid Price: 46,720.00
LOT 39 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT
L.A.: 328sqm.
Lot 14 Blk 3 Brgy. Estrella
Minimum Bid Price: 52,800.00
LOT 40 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT
L.A.: 374sqm.
Lot 17 Blk 2 Brgy. Estrella
Minimum Bid Price: 60,000.00
LOT 41 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT
L.A.: 300sqm.
Lot 14 Blk 4 Brgy. Estrella
Minimum Bid Price: 48,000.00
LOT 42 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT
L.A.: 471sqm.
Lot 18 Blk 4 Brgy. Estrella
Minimum Bid Price: 75,360.00
LOT 43 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT
L.A.: 403sqm.
Lot 3 Blk 3 Brgy. Estrella
Minimum Bid Price: 64,800.00
LOT 44 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT
L.A.: 436sqm.
Lot 15 Blk 3 Brgy. Estrella
Minimum Bid Price: 69,760.00
LOT 45 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT
L.A.: 637sqm.
Lot 16 Blk 3 Brgy. Estrella
Minimum Bid Price: 101,920.00
LOT 46 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT
L.A.: 300sqm.
Lot 4 Blk 2 Brgy. Estrella
Minimum Bid Price: 48,000.00
LOT 47 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT
L.A.: 300sqm.
Lot 7 Blk 2 Brgy. Estrella
Minimum Bid Price: 48,000.00
LOT 48 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT
L.A.: 300sqm.
Lot 3 Blk 4 Brgy. Estrella
Minimum Bid Price: 48,000.00

SAN ANTONIO
LOT 49 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT
L.A.: 792sqm.
Lot 32 Buliran, San Antonio
Minimum Bid Price: 59,250.00

SAN JOSE
LOT 50 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT
L.A.: 165sqm.
Lot 1635-B-1 #37 Cadhit St.
Minimum Bid Price: 470,250.00
LOT 51 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT
L.A.: 327sqm.
F.A.: 81sqm.
Lot 15 Sibo Labot, Brgy. A Pascual
Minimum Bid Price: 227,200.00
LOT 52 - VACANT LOT
L.A.: 191sqm.
Lot 8 Blk 13 Christianville Subd., Abar I
Minimum Bid Price: 326,800.00

STA ROSA
LOT 53 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT
L.A.: 9,816sqm.
WITHDRAWN
Lot [illegible] Brgy. [illegible]
Minimum Bid Price: 837,000.00
LOT 54 - VACANT LOT
L.A.: 2,500sqm.
Lot 2727-C-2-A Brgy. Mapalad
Minimum Bid Price: 255,000.00

STO DOMINGO
LOT 55 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT
L.A.: 979+3120=4099 sqm.
F.A.: 280sqm.
Lots 2236-C & 2234 Brgy. Malasin
Minimum Bid Price: 2,063,250.00
LOT 56 - VACANT LOT
L.A.: 612sqm.
Lot 11 Malasin, Sto. Domingo
Minimum Bid Price: 364,140.00
LOT 57 - VACANT LOT
L.A.: 646sqm.
Lot 12 Malasin, Sto. Domingo,
Minimum Bid Price: 384,370.00
LOT 58 - VACANT LOT
L.A.: 678sqm.
Lot 13 Malasin, Sto. Domingo,
Minimum Bid Price: 403,410.00
LOT 59 - VACANT LOT
L.A.: 710sqm.
Lot 14 Malasin, Sto. Domingo,
Minimum Bid Price: 422,450.00
LOT 60 - VACANT LOT
L.A.: 752sqm.
Lot 15 Malasin, Sto. Domingo,
Minimum Bid Price: 447,440.00
LOT 61 - VACANT LOT
L.A.: 6077+10057=16134 sqm.
Lot 2160 & Lot 2159 Brgy., Malasin, Sto. Domingo
Minimum Bid Price: 459,800.00
LOT 62 - VACANT LOT
L.A.: 1,080sqm.
Lot 21 Brgy., Malasin,
Minimum Bid Price: 128,250.00
LOT 63 - VACANT LOT
L.A.: 1,143sqm.
Lot 22 Brgy., Malasin,
Minimum Bid Price: 135,731.25
LOT 64 - VACANT LOT
L.A.: 1,206sqm.
Lot 23 Brgy., Malasin,
Minimum Bid Price: 143,212.50
LOT 65 - VACANT LOT
L.A.: 1,269sqm.
Lot 24 Brgy., Malasin,
Minimum Bid Price: 150,693.75
LOT 66 - VACANT LOT
L.A.: 1,332sqm.
Lot 25 Brgy., Malasin,
Minimum Bid Price: 158,175.00
LOT 67 - VACANT LOT
L.A.: 1,397sqm.
Lot 26 Brgy., Malasin,
Minimum Bid Price: 165,893.75
LOT 68 - VACANT LOT
L.A.: 1,459sqm.
Lot 27 Brgy., Malasin,
Minimum Bid Price: 173,256.25
LOT 69 - VACANT LOT
L.A.: 792sqm.
Lot 1 Malasin, Sto. Domingo,
Minimum Bid Price: 526,680.00
LOT 70 - VACANT LOT
L.A.: 475sqm.
Lot 2 Malasin, Sto. Domingo,
Minimum Bid Price: 126,350.00
LOT 71 - VACANT LOT
L.A.: 346sqm.
Lot 3 Malasin, Sto. Domingo,
Minimum Bid Price: 92,036.00
LOT 72 - VACANT LOT
L.A.: 379sqm.
Lot 4 Malasin, Sto. Domingo,
Minimum Bid Price: 100,814.00
LOT 73 - VACANT LOT
L.A.: 412sqm.
Lot 5 Malasin, Sto. Domingo,
Minimum Bid Price: 109,592.00
LOT 74 - VACANT LOT
L.A.: 445sqm.
Lot 6 Malasin, Sto. Domingo,
Minimum Bid Price: 118,370.00
LOT 75 - VACANT LOT
L.A.: 479sqm.
Lot 7 Malasin, Sto. Domingo,
Minimum Bid Price: 127,414.00
LOT 76 - VACANT LOT
L.A.: 512sqm.
Lot 8 Malasin, Sto. Domingo,
Minimum Bid Price: 136,192.00
LOT 77 - VACANT LOT
L.A.: 545sqm.
Lot 9 Malasin, Sto. Domingo,
Minimum Bid Price: 144,970.00
LOT 78 - VACANT LOT
L.A.: [illegible]sqm.
WITHDRAWN
Lot [illegible] Sto. Domingo,
Minimum Bid Price: 153,748.00

TALAVERA
LOT 79 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT
L.A.: 1,210sqm.
Lot 2053-B-1 #457 Purok 4, Brgy. Calipahan
Minimum Bid Price: 338,800.00
LOT 80 - VACANT LOT
L.A.: 12,211.50 sqm.
Lot 91 Brgy., Bakal II, Maharlika Highway
Minimum Bid Price: 3,219,750.00

TALUGTUG
LOT 81 - VACANT LOT
L.A.: 44,240sqm.
Lot 2279 Brgy. Alula, Talugtug,
Minimum Bid Price: 498,000.00

BULACAN

BULACAN
LOT 82 - VACANT LOT
L.A.: 181sqm.
Lot 5150-E Brgy. Taliptip
Minimum Bid Price: 81,750.00

BUSTOS
LOT 83 - VACANT LOT
L.A.: 629+91+500 sqm.
Lot 6-A-3, Lot 3, Lot 2 Camachilihan,
Minimum Bid Price: 441,150.00

CALUMPIT
LOT 84 - VACANT LOT
L.A.: 233sqm.
Lot 20 Blk 8 Casia Biflora Dr. Green Plains Subd. San Marcos
Minimum Bid Price: 594,150.00
LOT 85 - VACANT LOT
L.A.: 200sqm.
Lot 14 Blk 8 Eucalyptus Dr., Green Plains., San Marcos
Minimum Bid Price: 646,000.00

GUIGUINTO
LOT 86 - VACANT LOT
L.A.: 337sqm.
Lot 2 Ruby St., Rosaryville II
Minimum Bid Price: 480,700.00

MEYCAUAYAN
LOT 87 - VACANT LOT
L.A.: 50sqm.
Lot 15 Blk 6 Emcco Subd. Brgy., Pandayan
Minimum Bid Price: 148,750.00
LOT 88 - VACANT LOT
L.A.: 50sqm.
Lot 16 Blk 6 Emcco Subd. Brgy. Pandayan,
Minimum Bid Price: 148,750.00
LOT 89 - VACANT LOT
L.A.: 50sqm.
Lot 17 Blk 6 Emcco Subd. Brgy. Pandayan
Minimum Bid Price: 148,750.00
LOT 90 - VACANT LOT
L.A.: 50sqm.
Lot 18 Blk 6 Emcco Subd. Brgy. Pandayan
Minimum Bid Price: 148,750.00
LOT 91 - VACANT LOT
L.A.: 2,177 sqm.
Lot 4885-A-2,4885-B-4,5830-A,2, #100 San Pedro St., Brgy. Tugatog
Minimum Bid Price: 3,330,385.00

PLARIDEL
LOT 92 - VACANT LOT
L.A.: 252sqm.
Lot 11 Blk 7 Dona Crispina Homes, Agnaya
Minimum Bid Price: 257,040.00
LOT 93 - VACANT LOT
L.A.: 252sqm.
Lot 22 Blk 7 Dona Crispina Homes, Agnaya
Minimum Bid Price: 257,040.00
LOT 94 - VACANT LOT
L.A.: 264sqm.
Lot 23 Blk 6 Dona Crispina Homes, Agnaya
Minimum Bid Price: 269,280.00
LOT 95 - VACANT LOT
L.A.: 264sqm.
Lot 25 Blk 6 Dona Crispina Homes, Agnaya
Minimum Bid Price: 269,280.00
LOT 96 - VACANT LOT
L.A.: 264sqm.
Lot 27 Blk 6 Dona Crispina Homes, Agnaya
Minimum Bid Price: 269,280.00
LOT 97 - VACANT LOT
L.A.: 264sqm.
Lot 29 Blk 6 Dona Crispina Homes, Agnaya
Minimum Bid Price: 269,280.00
LOT 98 - VACANT LOT
L.A.: 264sqm.
Lot 31 Blk 6 Dona Crispina Homes, Agnaya
Minimum Bid Price: 269,280.00
LOT 99 - VACANT LOT
L.A.: 264sqm.
Lot 33 Blk 6 Dona Crispina Homes, Agnaya
Minimum Bid Price: 269,280.00
LOT 100 - VACANT LOT
L.A.: 264sqm.
Lot 35 Blk 6 Dona Crispina Homes, Agnaya
Minimum Bid Price: 269,280.00
LOT 101 - VACANT LOT
L.A.: 264sqm.
Lot 41 Blk 6 Dona Crispina Homes, Agnaya
Minimum Bid Price: 269,280.00

SAN ILDEFONSO
LOT 102 - VACANT LOT
L.A.: 1,820sqm.
Lot 3206 Villacorta St., Poblacion
Minimum Bid Price: 1,365,000.00

SAN MIGUEL
LOT 103 - VACANT LOT
L.A.: 5,000sqm.
Lot 3033 San Jose
Minimum Bid Price: 4,725,000.00

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SEC okays foreign stock offering of Megaworld

Firm seeks to raise ₱4.8B in net proceeds

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

THE SECURITIES AND Exchange Commission (SEC) has approved holding firm Megaworld Corp.'s proposed international stock offering slated for April 24.

In documents filed with the SEC, Megaworld said it has assumed a price of P1.44 a share and generate up to P4.8 billion in net proceeds for the primary portion and P580 million from the sale by one of its major shareholders.

Trading in shares of Megaworld will be suspended from April 7 to April 21 to pave the way for its international stock offer.

Megaworld will sell up to 3.9 billion common shares consisting of 3.5 billion primary shares and 423.2 million secondary shares.

The secondary shares to be sold are owned by Colony-CB Richard Ellis, Megaworld's foreign partner.

The offer price will be calculated at a zero to 10 percent discount using the 10-day volume average market price of Megaworld by April 6.

Of its total offer, Megaworld will sell 95 percent or 3.7 billion shares to international investors and 5 percent or 196 million shares to local investors.

Megaworld has an option to increase its offer by 588.47 million shares to raise the total offer size to 4.5 billion shares.

Megaworld has tapped UBS AG as its international underwriter and BDO Capital and Investment Corp. to manage the local offering.

Megaworld will embark on an international roadshow to lure foreign investors to its offering starting March 27 until April 6. By the end of April 6, Megaworld hopes to determine its final offer price.

Its offer period will be from April 10 to 18. Listing of the shares will be on April 24.

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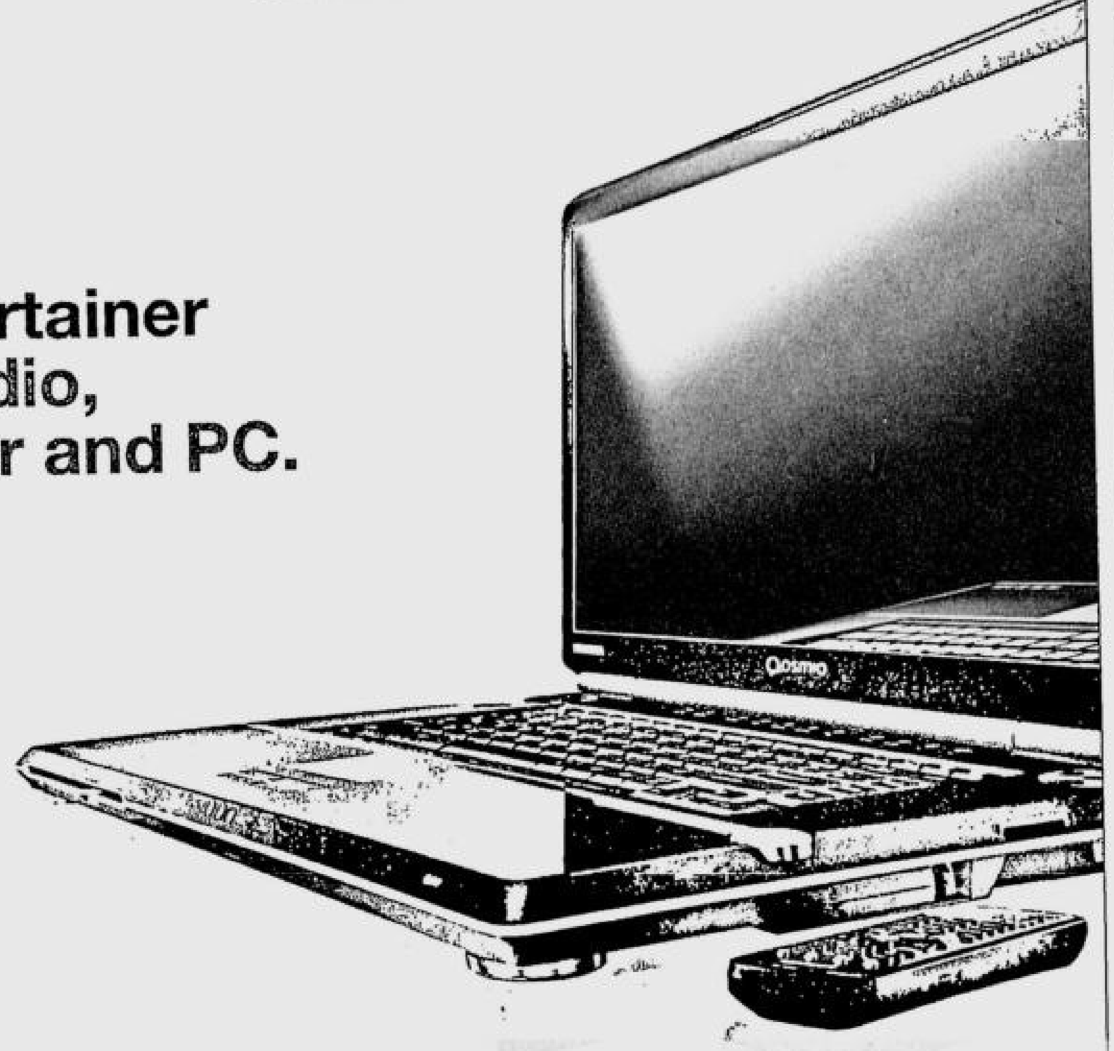

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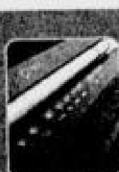
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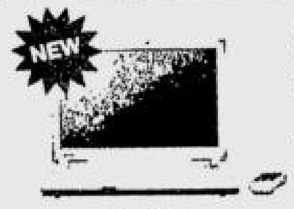
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Roger Salvante, Senior Manager of Tricom Dynamics Inc. said that the participation of Toshiba in this year's BPI Madness Fair aims to provide consumers with the opportunity to buy the Toshiba Laptop they most would like to own, on the best possible credit terms.

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ADVT

₱8-B SLEX rehab finally underway

Repair of Alabang viaduct expected to be completed in 2 years

By Daxim L. Lucas

THE P8-BILLION PROJECT TO repair, widen and extend the South Luzon Expressway (SLEX) was launched yesterday, starting with the initial work on the dilapidated Marcos-era Alabang viaduct.

According to officials of South Luzon Tollway Corp. (SLTC), the first phase of the project—the repair and widening of the viaduct itself—will take at least two years to finish.

SLTC is a joint venture between Philippine National Construction Corp. (PNCC) and Malaysian toll operator MTD Capital Bhd.

MTD chair Dato Dr. Nik Hussain Abdul Rahman said preliminary work on the Alabang viaduct—which allows motorists to bypass the congested Alabang-South Super Highway intersection—began yesterday with pre-civil works along Bunye Road.

The entire project will initially be funded by a $50-million capital infusion by the group's Malaysian principals, while another $60 million will be raised through a syndicated loan from commercial banks, he said.

The viaduct rehabilitation is expected to improve the volume capacity, riding quality, and structural integrity of the superstructure.

The project's second phase, on the other hand, will include the upgrade and widening of the Alabang-Sta. Rosa stretch from the current six lanes to eight lanes, and the Sta. Rosa-Calamba stretch from four lanes to six lanes.

The final phase calls for the addition of a new four-lane highway from Calamba to Sto. Tomas, Batangas. The extension will include an associated spur toward the existing Southern Luzon Arterial Road (Star).

Yesterday, Transportation Secretary Leandro Mendoza briefed President Macapagal-Arroyo on the project and assured her that it would begin on the second quarter of this year.

An estimated 150,000 vehicles ferry over a million passengers via SLEZ everyday while over 60 percent of all produce in Luzon passes through it en route to major markets and air and sea ports.

Exporter revs up Subic trade

By Ronnel W. Domingo

A MANUFACTURER OF AFTER-sales car body kits based in Subic yesterday announced that its export venture had reached full throttle, shipping out as much as 160 sets a month.

George Ramirez, president of McGram Fusion Inc., said the company had reached its export target volume for car body kits made of fiber glass, carbon fiber and kevlar.

Ramirez explained that the kits were primarily for car owners who want to enhance the aesthetic features of their vehicles.

"All our products, including the restored vehicles refitted with some modern parts, are for export," he said. "The restored cars are either left-hand drive vintage or right-hand drive brand new models. That means none of our products would be allowed to be registered or used in the Philippines."

Ramirez's announcement came just as Subic authorities decided to push for the revival of the racing circuit at the Freeport.

Armand C. Arreza, Administrator of Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority, said Ramirez's business would boost the revival of the Subic International Raceway.

"One of the reasons why Subic is a staple name in the racing industry is because we have one of the most difficult race tracks in the country," Arreza said.

Also, the SBMA announced that a Finland-based institution, Wartsila Land & Sea Academy Inc., would infuse an additional P6 million to expand its existing facility in Subic.

WLSA plans to operate and manage a training center that would conduct maritime and power plant trainings.

In 2001, WLSA started operating in Subic its regional training and research center for the Asia-Pacific rim, offering specialized nautical engineering courses and product services for seafarers.

TEACHERS and students learn new skills with the help of Community Technology Learning Centers funded by Microsoft Philippines.

Making IT work for students

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

THE CANIZARES NATIONAL High School in Cotabato City is plagued by the same problems hounding most of the country's rural public schools.

Yet, despite the chronic lack of classrooms, teachers, books and facilities, the school high up in the mountains is buzzing with activity.

Here, minority groups like the Tedurays and the Maguindanaons are studying alongside their Muslim and Christian brothers, making documents and research papers using the latest in computer technology.

The same is happening in the Davao Del Sur National High School.

A physics class composed of fourth year high school students, for instance, will have groups of four bent over the latest computers working out scientific problems in a way they haven't done before.

CORPORATE CITIZEN

As a result, many of the students here were able to pull up their grades by as much as four percentage points.

These are just some of the many good fruits produced by the Partners in Learning program of Microsoft Philippines, which last year celebrated its 10th year of operations in the country.

World's biggest

Partners in Learning is a global program designed to help people "realize their full potential" by making the most of information technology.

Microsoft is in an enviable position to do that, being the world's biggest software development company.

Global in scope but local in implementation, the program provides significant investment in software. More than $250 million in cash grants had been turned over in the course of five years to deliver information and communication skills training, tailored curriculum development, technical support and research funds and resources to students and teachers.

PIL has been in the Philippines for some three years and is made possible by Microsoft's partnerships with the Department of Education, over 28 registered Parent-Teacher Associations, 200 colleges and universities across the Philippines, nongovernment organizations such as the Philippine Business for Social Progress, and scores of volunteer faculty members and students.

Encouraging

These partnerships under PIL do not directly benefit the students alone, but teachers as well.

Sandee Bodikey, who teaches physics at the Davao Del Sur National High School, says PIL helped her become an even better teacher and member of the community.

"I was able to better engage my students, and the quality of my teaching has improved," Bodikey said. "It is very encouraging to see students interact with technology, especially in these public schools where they have so little."

Anwar Ito, a technology and livelihood teacher at the Canizares National High School, shares Bodikey's sentiment.

"The training developed me professionally, and gave me the opportunity to share my knowledge," he said.

Ito added that there was a time when it was so hard to get the students to attend classes.

But when they saw what computers can do, they found a reason to go to school and participate in classes with enthusiasm.

"Now, they don't even want to go home because they are so excited," Ito said.

Sam Jacoba, who handles the PIL program for Microsoft in the Philippines, says Microsoft intends to infect the entire education system with the same enthusiasm.

With the way the program has been progressing, Microsoft has every reason to believe that it will happen one day.

The PIL program has already trained more than 3,500 teachers from 3,000 public high schools nationwide, forging a network of ICT-enabled educators across the country.

Jacoba said it was the teachers who proved to Microsoft that the program was working and making a difference in the lives of children and the communities.

To recognize these teachers, Microsoft started giving out the Innovative Teachers Leadership Awards to honor and reward secondary public school teachers who have ingeniously integrated technology in classroom teaching and learning.

The first winner was Sherlita Daguisonan of the Iligan City East High School, who inspired first year students to learn Math through computers.

The award is one of Microsoft's programs designed specifically for teachers in the Philippines.

Potentials unleashed

Other programs include:

- No Teacher Left Behind, which involves the training of public school teachers in more than 200 colleges and universities on basic information and communications technology, desktop productivity and software development;
- Teachers PC, which is a partnership between Microsoft, Intel and Asia United Bank, to allow public school teachers to have their own personal computers at friendly terms;
- PIL Community, which connects educators, administrators, students and parents through technology; and,
- Faculty and Student Ambassador Program, which is a multi-university network that facilitates technology transfer and instills community service to teachers and students.

Jacoba said Microsoft has taken a special interest in upgrading teachers' skills, especially in public high schools, because it believes that, for every teacher trained and skilled properly, there are dozens of students and co-teachers who stand to benefit.'

Bodikey, for instance, is now involved in curriculum development in Mindanao under the Basic Education Assistance for Mindanao project.

The project was designed to improve the quality of education in Mindanao, particularly those involving indigenous people.

These and other stories from the teachers touched by the PIL have a common theme: information technology can make a difference in the lives of students and teachers.

Microsoft is confident that, as the PIL program reaches out to more schools, it will not only be the potentials of the students and teachers that will be unleashed, but that of the Philippines' as well.

Innovative Teachers

SOME of the finalists to Microsoft Philippines' Innovative Teachers Leadership Awards

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of March 24, 2006)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
FINANCIAL					
BANKS					
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	36	36.5	35.5	35.5	418,600
Bank of the Phil. Islands	63	64.5	63	63.5	1,003,200
China Banking Corp.	680	685	680	685	3,510
Citystate Savings Bank	19	19	19	19	300
Export and Ind. Bank Inc.	0.41	0.41	0.4	0.4	9,280,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	79.5	83	79.5	82	312,300
International Exch. Bank	28	28.5	28	28.5	41,900
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	38	40	38	40	2,718,100
Philippine National Bank	34	36.5	34	36.5	176,600
Phil. Savings Bank	35	35	35	35	20,000
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	13.25	13.5	13.25	13.25	65,000
Security Bank Corp.	41	42	41	42	3,244,600
Union Bank of the Phil.	37	40.5	37	40	146,100
OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS					
First Metro Invest. Corp.	24.5	24.5	24	24.5	2,900
Phil. Stock Exchange Inc.	150	150	150	150	210
Sun Life Financial Inc.	2130	2135	2130	2135	250
Ivantage Corp.	0.84	0.84	0.84	0.84	5,400,000
INDUSTRIAL					
ELECTRICITY, ENERGY, POWER & WATER					
First Gen Corp.	42	42.5	42	42.5	796,600
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	45	45.5	44	44	813,600
Manila Electric Co. A	13.25	13.25	13	13	64,700
Manila Electric Co. B	20	20.5	20	20.25	246,100
Manila Water Co. Inc.	6.5	6.5	6.4	6.4	1,785,000
Petron Corp.	4.6	4.6	4.5	4.5	3,259,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	0.9	0.91	0.9	0.91	380,000
FOOD, BEVERAGE & TOBACCO					
CADP Group Corp.	2	2	2	2	30,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	19.25	19.25	19	19.25	12,800
Jollibee Foods Corp.	38.5	38.5	38	38	8,500
Pancake House Inc.	3.65	3.75	3.65	3.75	110,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	2.42	2.7	2.42	2.6	3,548,000
San Miguel Corp. A	60	60.5	60	60.5	187,900
San Miguel Corp. B	81.5	82	81.5	81.5	22,400
Universal Robina Corp.	18	18	17.75	18	3,028,600
Vitarich Corp.	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	1,050,000
CONSTRUCTION, INFRASTRUCTURE & ALLIED SERVICES					
Southeast Asian Cement	0.31	0.32	0.31	0.32	5,850,000
Engineering Equip. Inc.	1.52	1.54	1.5	1.52	4,616,000
Holcim Philippines Inc.	4.15	4.2	4.15	4.2	650,000
Republic Cement Corp.	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	50,000
CHEMICALS					
Euro-Med Lab. Phil. Inc.	2.85	2.85	2.85	2.85	50,000
DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS					
Global Equities Inc.	0.07	0.0725	0.07	0.07	4,200,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.075	0.075	0.075	0.075	1,700,000
Steniel Manufacturing	0.65	0.69	0.57	0.61	7,010,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.0075	0.0075	0.0075	0.0075	48,000,000
Ayala Corp.	360	367.5	360	365	409,850
Alsons Cons. Res. Inc.	0.51	0.51	0.51	0.51	110,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	5.1	5.2	5.1	5.1	106,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.024	0.024	0.024	0.024	4,500,000
A. Soriano Corp.	2.44	2.46	2.44	2.44	296,000
APC Group Inc.	0.225	0.24	0.225	0.24	6,500,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	1,000,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	0.88	0.89	0.88	0.89	790,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	8.7	8.7	8.7	8.7	45,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	1.02	1.06	1	1.02	7,511,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	2.95	3.05	2.95	3	2,558,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	3.05	3.15	3.05	3.05	1,557,000
House of Investments Inc.	1.24	1.3	1.24	1.26	837,000
JG Summit Holdings Inc.	5.9	6.2	5.9	6.1	3,474,000
Medco Holdings	0.24	0.24	0.215	0.215	170,000
Multitech Inv. Corp.	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	200,000
Pacifica	0.011	0.011	0.011	0.011	5,000,000
Prime Orion Phils. Inc.	0.26	0.27	0.26	0.26	8,950,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.55	0.57	0.55	0.57	1,100,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.14	0.15	0.14	0.145	28,390,000
SM Investments Corp.	230	231	228	229	565,460
Seafront Resources Corp.	0.53	0.56	0.53	0.56	210,000
Wellex Industries Inc.	0.13	0.14	0.13	0.135	6,880,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	10.75	11	10.75	11	5,238,200
Belle Corp.	1.1	1.16	1.1	1.16	15,476,000
A Brown Company Inc.	0.94	0.94	0.94	0.94	300,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.26	0.3	0.26	0.29	11,040,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	1.94	1.98	1.9	1.9	3,874,000
C&P Homes Inc.	1.8	2	1.8	1.8	181,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.22	0.225	0.22	0.225	6,180,000
EIB Realty Developers Inc.	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	300,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.6	0.67	0.6	0.65	181,900,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.031	0.034	0.031	0.033	21,800,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.71	0.72	0.71	0.71	2,020,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.36	1.44	1.36	1.36	10,802,000
Gotesco Land Inc.	0.075	0.075	0.075	0.075	200,000
Gotesco Land Inc. B	0.07	0.075	0.07	0.075	200,000
Highlands Prime Inc.	3.4	3.5	3.3	3.5	245,000
Interport Res.	0.0048	0.005	0.0048	0.005	40,000,000
Interport Res. B	0.005	0.0055	0.005	0.005	76,000,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.225	0.24	0.225	0.23	2,340,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.55	0.58	0.55	0.58	2,330,000
Marsteel Cons. Inc. B	0.017	0.017	0.017	0.017	2,000,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.48	1.56	1.48	1.52	18,702,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.33	0.35	0.33	0.35	64,080,000
MRC Allied Ind. Inc.	0.32	0.32	0.31	0.31	2,890,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	7.8	8.1	7.8	8.1	2,274,000
Phil Realty and Holdings	0.31	0.35	0.31	0.35	16,840,000
SM Development Corp.	1.52	1.62	1.52	1.58	2,073,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	8	8	7.9	7.9	1,921,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.155	0.155	0.15	0.155	4,010,000
SERVICE					
MEDIA					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	12.25	12.25	12.25	12.25	30,000
TELECOMMUNICATIONS					
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	0.98	1.06	0.98	1.04	21,300,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	890	895	890	895	12,150
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	2.95	3.05	2.95	3.05	5,473,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	1875	1880	1870	1880	227,200
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY					
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	1,000,000
Imperial Res.	0.013	0.013	0.013	0.013	8,000,000
Ionics Inc.	1.26	1.28	1.26	1.26	207,000
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.047	0.047	0.047	0.047	1,000,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.0525	0.0525	0.0525	0.0525	100,000
Music Semiconductors Corp.	1.12	1.12	1.1	1.1	80,000
Philweb Corp.	0.023	0.023	0.022	0.022	46,600,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.94	1.94	1.94	1.94	155,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	11	11.5	11	11	1,711,500
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc.	0.99	0.99	0.97	0.97	450,000
Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	1.3	1.38	1.3	1.38	17,000
HOTEL & LEISURE					
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	1.86	1.88	1.86	1.86	1,991,000
Manila Jockey Club	3	3	3	3	10,000
Philippine Racing Club	3	3	3	3	6,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.42	0.47	0.4	0.45	10,010,000
EDUCATION					
Ipeople Inc.	3.2	3.25	3.2	3.25	48,000
DIVERSIFIED SERVICES					
Macroasia Corp.	1.58	1.58	1.56	1.58	220,000
Paxys Inc.	8.9	9	8.8	8.9	651,000
Philcomsat Holdings Corp.	0.82	0.92	0.82	0.92	100,000
MINING & OIL					
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. A	1.16	1.16	1.1	1.12	535,000
Apex Mining Co. Inc. B	1.36	1.36	1.3	1.34	991,000
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	100,000,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	6.9	7	6.8	6.8	833,000
Benguet Corp. A	7	7	7	7	15,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.215	0.215	0.205	0.205	8,820,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.26	0.27	0.26	0.27	4,760,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.017	0.018	0.017	0.018	12,700,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.026	0.026	0.026	0.026	11,900,000
Omico Corp.	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	325,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	2.26	2.3	2.24	2.28	6,188,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	2.3	2.34	2.28	2.32	5,525,000
Semirara Mining Corp.	25.5	26	25.5	26	76,200
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.29	0.3	0.29	0.3	1,590,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.32	0.32	0.32	0.32	20,000
OIL					
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.26	0.27	0.26	0.27	3,540,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0075	0.0075	0.0075	0.0075	5,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.0085	0.0085	0.0085	0.0085	4,000,000
Petroenergy Res. Corp.	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.8	30,000
PREFERRED					
PLDT (10% Pref) Series C	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	500
PLDT (10% Pref) Series F	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	2,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series G	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	4,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series H	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	2,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series I	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series J	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	3,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series K	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	6,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series L	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series N	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	700
PLDT (10% Pref) Series S	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	300
PLDT (10% Pref) Series T	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	400
PLDT (10% Pref) Series U	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	4,500
PLDT (10% Pref) Series V	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	4,600
PLDT (10% Pref) Series W	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	8,300
PLDT (10% Pref) Series X	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	2,400
WARRANTS, PHIL. DEPOSIT RECEIPTS, ETC.					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	12.5	12.5	12	12	89,000

CURRENCIES

March 24, 2006 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.835352	1.000000	51.1540
Japan	Yen	0.007085	0.008482	0.4339
United Kingdom	Pound	1.449252	1.734900	88.7471
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.107661	0.128881	6.5928
Switzerland	Franc	0.634284	0.759301	38.8413
Canada	Dollar	0.716979	0.858295	43.9052
Singapore	Dollar	0.515713	0.617360	31.5804
Australia	Dollar	0.596510	0.714082	36.5282
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.216670	2.653576	135.7410
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.222737	0.266638	13.6396
Brunei	Dollar	0.514126	0.615460	31.4832
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000092	0.000110	0.0056
Thailand	Baht	0.021370	0.025582	1.3086
UAE	Dirham	0.227461	0.272294	13.9289
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.197100	61.2365
Argentina	Peso	0.271571	0.325098	16.6301
Brazil	Real	0.388481	0.465051	23.7892
Denmark	Kroner	0.134023	0.160439	8.2071
India	Rupee	0.018801	0.022507	1.1513
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.226413	0.271039	13.8647
Mexico	New Peso	0.076613	0.091714	4.6915
New Zealand	Dollar	0.520858	0.623519	31.8955
Norway	Kroner	0.125417	0.150137	7.6801
South Africa	Rand	0.131963	0.157973	8.0810
Korea	Won	0.000856	0.001025	0.0524
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.025673	0.030733	1.5721
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000389	0.000466	0.0238

People, Events & Products

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Editor **Aries Espinosa**

Unilab partners with CDO in helping malnourished children

LEADING PHARMACEUTICAL FIRM United Laboratories Inc (Unilab) has partnered with food processor CDO-Foodsphere Inc in a campaign to save children out of malnutrition and provide medicines to the poorest of the poor.

According to Dindo Danao, executive director of Odyssey Foundation, which serves as the corporate social responsibility arm of CDO-Foosphere, Unilab has committed to provide medicines, vitamin supplements and healthcare services for the beneficiaries of Gabay Buhay feeding program.

Gabay Buhay is a supplemental feeding program launched by Odyssey Foundation last year to help hundreds of poor children suffering from malnutrition.

Raymund Santiago, corporate affairs officer of Unilab, described the partnership between the two companies as a significant step towards getting the private sector involved in addressing the gargantuan problem of malnutrition in the Philippines.

"This partnership is in line with our goal of reaching out to the marginalized sector of society and a part of our corporate philosophy to provide affordable and quality medicines to the Filipino people," he said.

Danao said such partnership has benefited some 900 people when the two companies organized a medical mission and provided free medicines to the poor residents of Valenzuela City recently.

This was on top of the Gabay Buhay supplemental feeding program, which is now on its second leg, with 150 children-beneficiaries, who are provided with free nutritious food and vitamin supplements on a regular basis.

In its first leg of implementation conducted between May and October 2005, the 16-week feeding program has restored to normal levels the weight of 116 previously underweight children.

According to the Food and Nutrition Research Institute (FNRI), some 3.7 million Filipino preschool children, with ages 0 to 5 years, were underweight as of 2001. Children become underweight when they suffer from acute or present malnutrition.

Danao said that under the CDO-Unilab tieup, medicines and vitamin supplements will also be provided to the extended families of the children-beneficiaries, all of whom belong to the poorest households in Valenzuela City.

He said Odyssey Foundation seeks to duplicate its success in Valenzuela City to other parts of the country, with the help of CDO, Unilab and other corporate sponsors.

"This speaks well of our vision of providing good nutrition and healthcare to malnourished kids," Danao said.

The initial target under the partnership, he said, is to save at least 750 children from malnutrition by 2007.

With an accreditation from the Securities and Exchange Commission and the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), Odyssey receives grants, gifts, legacies, donations and financial aids to assist its operations focused on nurturing the health of underweight children in the Philippines.

CDO-Foodsphere is a multi-awarded meat processing firm with deep concern for the welfare of the less privileged members of our society.

Unilab, on the other hand, is the top drug manufacturer with 60 years of corporate experience in developing, manufacturing and marketing a wide range of prescription and consumer health products covering all major therapeutic categories in the Philippines and other Asian countries.

ADB PRESIDENT, BRITISH AMBASSADOR HONORED

The Oxford and Cambridge Club of the Philippines held a reception in honor of the British Ambassador to the Philippines, His Excellency Peter Beckingham (Cambridge) and the Asian Development Bank President Haruhiko Koruda (Oxford). Among the Filipinos who graduated from Oxford and Cambridge are: Fred Elizalde (Cambridge), Antonio Araneta (Oxford), Ambassador Jose Romero (Cambridge), Ambassador Jose Syjuco (Oxford), Ferdinand Marcos (Oxford), Philip Romualdez (Oxford), Jeffrey and Winnefred Ching (Cambridge), Luis Virata (Cambridge), Elizabeth-Cu-unjieng Virata (Cambridge), Philip Cu-unjing (Cambridge), Antonio Periquet (Oxford), David Kaufman (Oxford) and Anatess Arnaldo-Oracion (Cambridge). The club's president is Philip Romualdez who graduated Master of Letters from Trinity College at Oxford University. Romualdez sees the Oxbridge Club to be at the center of major British-related activities in the Philippines. He said that it will further business relations between the U.K. and the Philippines. The Oxford and Cambridge Club members (who are graduates of either Oxford or Cambridge University in the United Kingdom) also elected chairman, His Excellency Peter Beckingham, who is United Kingdom's Ambassador to the Philippines. Romualdez believes that the club will be able to effectively link graduates of Oxford and Cambridge with work/business opportunities in areas/fields where Oxbridge influence may work. The Club will co-host visiting dignitaries who are graduates of Oxford and Cambridge (e.g., Prince Charles, former British Prime Minister M. Thatcher and former U. S. President Clinton). He added that the Club serves as link to graduates of Oxbridge coming to the Philippines (from other countries) for pleasure or business. Lastly, Romualdez said that the club is establishing strong ties with the other Oxford and Cambridge Clubs around the world and participates in their activities like tourism, arts and business.

EFFIE NAÑAS DANCENTRE'S SUMMER PROGRAM

If you are looking for good quality time that will fill your summer appetites for cool and one-of-a-kind activities, the Effie Nañas DanCentre's summer program is just for you. The DanCentre, conveniently located at the 4th level of the Shangri-La Plaza Mall and easily accessible through the MRT, has prepared an exciting line-up of summer activities suitable for kids and adults alike. Ballet classes are offered from age 3 up to the advanced and professional levels, while new activites such as Pilates, Jazz, Hip-hop, Ladies' Ballet, and Ballroom Dancing are also included in the DanCentre's summer program. For further inquiries please call 633-7871 or you may visit our studio at the 4th level of the Shangri-la Plaza Mall, Mandaluyong. We look forward to seeing you this summer at the Effie Nañas DanCentre.

SYNGENTA MARKS 5TH YEAR WITH TREE-PLANTING ACTIVITY

Syngenta
PLANT

Agribusiness leader Syngenta Philippines Inc celebrated its 5th year anniversary with a tree-planting activity recently held at C5 East Rembo Service Road in Makati City. The activity is part of the company's global tree-plating project with a mission of planting 40,000 trees globally. Syngenta has planted a total of 47 trees at C5 which represent the number of Syngenta Crop Protection member-staff in the Philippines. Organized by the Department of Environmental Services of Makati City, the tree-planting project aims to sustain the company's overall campaign on environmental protection. Shown in photo are (from left): Hector Lojo, VP for corporate sales and professional products; Thiele Topacio, VP for marketing; Nap Saavedra, VP for technical and development; and Edgar Juan Surtida, president and CEO.

G&G Logistics, Inc.
SHIP WISE
SURE CARGO

G&G LOGISTICS LAUNCHES SHIP WISE, SURE CARGO FOR 2006

G&G Logistics Inc recently launched its brand of services Ship Wise for LCL Domestic Cargo Consolidation Service and Sure Cargo for FCL Domestic Cargo Service. The soft launching was made simultaneous in Manila, Davao, Cebu, GenSan, Zamboanga and Cagayan. Shown in photo are the G&G Davao marketing team (from left): Ronaldo Samong, vice president for marketing; Ritchell Palma, Ruben Dinoy, Joseph Arthur A. Garcia, chief executive officer, Mark Monge and Stan Javier.

100 years of waking up to Kellogg's

KELLOGG, THE COMPANY THAT INVENTED flaked cereals and urged people to improve their health by changing their breakfast habits, is celebrating its centennial anniversary worldwide.

Company founders Will Keith Kellogg and his brother Dr. John Harvey Kellogg discovered the process of creating cereals in Battle Creek, Michigan. By extracting the corn grit or "sweetheart of the corn" and adding malt flavoring, the two were able to come up with tasty corn flakes, a discovery which paved the way for healthier, lighter and grain-based meals instead of heavy, fat-laden breakfasts.

A pioneer in the ready-to-eat cereal business, Kellogg's was the first to invest in research and development to improve the nutritional quality of its products. The founders espoused the philosophy that diet played an important role in a healthy lifestyle and that the most important meal of the day was breakfast. This was unanimously confirmed through research conducted by top nutrition experts.

Through the years Kellogg has continually improved its product line to meet the needs of consumers. It came up with the first high-protein and high-fiber breakfast cereals ever offered to consumers.

It was among the first food companies to respond to the growing awareness for the importance of nutrition and fitness by publishing its nutrition policy, outlining its fortification practices and commitment to nutrition, promoting responsible advertising and pushing for consumer education. Kellogg was the first cereal company to introduce nutrition labeling and list the amount of sugar in its cereals on the side panel of its packages.

Today, Kellogg's is the leading cereal brand worldwide. It is committed to providing wholesome, nutritious and flavorful products to people all over the world.

Cartoonist group goes malling in SM Exhibit

THIRTY FIVE OF SOME OF THE country's top editorial and strip cartoonists will showcase their works in Kartun, Komiks, at Karikatur, an exhibit marking their 28th year, from March 27 to 30 at the SM Megamall Activity Center.

This year's theme, very appropriately, will be malling - shopping and movie watching, with each cartoonist defining this phenomenon with strokes of his pen and wit. Part social commentary, part lifestyle insight, part personal perspective - these works from the Samahan ng Kartunista sa Pilipinas (SKP) capture malling with a total sense of fun.

SKP president Boboy Yanzon, says that Kartun, Komiks, at Karikatur sets off a month long series of events in line with the group's anniversary. Apart from the exhibit, the Megamall event will also feature a Caricature Session by Barry Jose, Norman Isaac and other artists on March 27 from 3 to 6 p.m. and a Workshop for Teenagers on March 28 at 1 p.m. Mike Tejido will conduct a Workshop for Primary Students on March 29, and the Dirty Kitchen Band will perform in the area on March 30. All events will take place in SM Megamall's Activity Center.

Other anniversary events include the launching of the SKP Roster Book and the SKP official website. A special tribute to SKP founders as well as recognition awards will be presented at the Cultural Center of the Philippines on April 18.

SKP was established in 1977 by some of the country's top editorial and strip cartoonists from all major broadsheets and tabloids. These include Larry Alcala (Siopawman, Tipin), Hugo Yonzon Jr. (Sakay n Moy, Dalaginding), Roni Santiago (Baltic & Co.), Tito Milambiling (Kusyo at Bugok), Boy Togonon (of the Manila Times), Pol Soller (of the former Daily Express), and Gene Cabrera (of the Philippine Free Press).

The organization seeks the advancement of freedom of expression in the Philippines through cartooning and graphics, to uplift the cartooning profession, and to foster fellowship of visual journalists from the Philippines and other countries.

The Kartun, Komiks, at Karikatur exhibit is one of the many exciting events at the SM Megamall. It will be held in cooperation with the Department of Agrarian Reform, First GenMango Comics, Epson and Oishi.

Monterey sparked hope for street children

HOPE DOES SPRING ETERNAL and Monterey is one company who believes a tiny spark could make a lot of difference especially in the lives of street children.

During a recent visit to Tuloy sa Don Bosco in Alabang, Muntinlupa City through the cooperation of Tuloy Foundation, Monterey raised hopes and even brought joy into the hearts of some 200 children by spending a morning of fun games and surprises.

According to Riza Sacay, Monterey sales services head, the activity' was their own little way of giving back to the community, "This has always been an important part of our public relations thrust each year. I guess what made this visit special was that it coincided with Monterey's 37th anniversary!"

The event featured exciting games along with a brief talk on healthy and nutritious eating, a glorious musical performance by the children and a simple ceremony to formally turn over Monterey's gifts to Tuloy Sa Don Bosco.

Says Sacay, "We salute the efforts of Tuloy Foundation in empowering the children to become responsible members of society not just by providing them shelter but adequate education as well."

It even served as a good information campaign on healthy eating. Sacay relates, "We are pleased to have been given the opportunity to instill the benefits of proper nutrition to a healthy well being to the children. Of course, street kid or not, health is an important aspect of life."

Tuloy sa Don Bosco is spearheaded by Father Rocky Evangelista to give street children a place to call home. It started as a one-room shelter and has since moved to a sizable compound with a school, gymnasium and several dormitory buildings to boot.

Having produced around 365 graduates from its valued vocational courses, Tuloy Foundation via Tuloy Sa Don Bosco remains committed to serving the needs of those abandoned, orphaned or out-of-school children in areas such as Parañaque, Las Piñas and Muntinlupa.

Monterey was more than happy to have initiated the visit to Tuloy Sa Don Bosco, "The experience made us appreciate our blessings more. Also, it made us realize that with hope, determination and prayers, one can overcome the adversities and become who they want to be." ends Sacay.

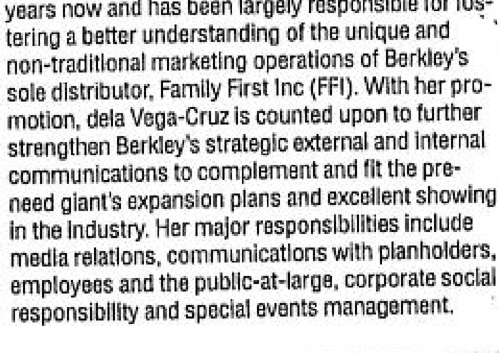
To know more about Monterey, please log on to www.montereyfoods.com.

HANDS ON MANILA BAGS DELL INNOVATION AWARD 2005

Hands On Manila Foundation Inc (HOM), a non-profit organization that provides volunteer opportunities in Metro Manila, bagged the 2005 Innovation Award sponsored by Dell during the recently concluded Hands On Network (HON) Leadership Conference in Boston, Massacusetts, USA. For more information about HOM, please attend its New Volunteers Orientation Session on Thursday, March 30, 6 p.m. at Powerbooks Greenbelt. You may also call 843-7044/5231 or visit www.handsonmla.org. Shown are Hands On Manila's chair and president lawyer Gianna R. Montinola (2nd from right) and trustee Junie S. del Mundo (right) receiving the Hands On Network Dell Innovation Award from Juan Johnson, vice president of The Coca Cola Company and chair of the Hands On Network board of directors (left) and Brady Lum, vice president of strategic planning and North American Integration, The Coca Cola Company and vice chair of Hands On Network (2nd from left).

NEW BERKLEY VP

Alan Rafe, president of Berkley International Philippines Inc, has announced the promotion of Maria Regina dela Vega-Cruz to the rank of vice president for corporate communications. Dela Vega-Cruz, who is also a TV host of a public service program on IBC-13, has been with Berkley for almost five years now and has been largely responsible for fostering a better understanding of the unique and non-traditional marketing operations of Berkley's sole distributor, Family First Inc (FFI). With her promotion, dela Vega-Cruz is counted upon to further strengthen Berkley's strategic external and internal communications to complement and fit the pre-need giant's expansion plans and excellent showing in the industry. Her major responsibilities include media relations, communications with planholders, employees and the public-at-large, corporate social responsibility and special events management.



PGA CARS, DON BOSCO SIGN MOA

PGA Cars, the sole importer and distributor of Porsche and Audi luxury cars in the Philippines, recently signed a Memorandum of Agreement with the Don Bosco Technical Institute Manpower Skills Training Center. PGA Cars will sponsor the training of deserving and highly qualified student trainees of Don Bosco's Industrial Skills Training Program. Shown sealing the agreement with a handshake are Bro. Elmer C. Rodriguez, SDB (left), technical director of the Don Bosco Technical Institute, and Miguel G. Coyiuto, president of PGA Cars Inc during the signing ceremonies at the Porsche Center Philippines along 201 Edsa, Mandaluyong City.

Call centers:

From office basics to global impact

ILLUSTRATION BY ALDEN JOSHUA D. CEDO

A CALL CENTER IS A CENTRALized office used for the purpose of receiving and transmitting a large volume of requests by telephone. A call centre is operated by a company to administer incoming product support or information inquiries from consumers. Outgoing calls for telemarketing, clientele, and debt collection are also made. In addition to a call center, collective handling of letters, faxes, and e-mails at one location is known as a contact center.

A call centre is often operated through an extensive open workspace, with work stations that include a computer, a telephone set/headset connected to a telecom switch, and one or more supervisor stations. It can be independently operated or networked with additional centers, often linked to a corporate computer network, including mainframes, microcomputers and LANs. Increasingly, the voice and data pathways into the center are linked through a set of new technologies called computer telephony integration (CTI).

Most major businesses use call centers to interact with their customers. Examples include utility companies, mail order catalogue firms, and customer support for computer hardware and software. Some businesses even service internal functions through call centers. Examples of this include help desks and sales support.

Mathematical theory

A call center can be viewed, from an operational point of view, as a queuing network. The simplest call center, consisting of a single type of customers and statistically identical servers, can be viewed as a single-queue. Queueing theory is a branch of mathematics in which models of such queuing systems have been developed. These models, in turn, are used to support work force planning and management, for example by helping answer the following common staffing-question: given a service-level, as determined by management, what is the least number of telephone agents that is required to achieve it. (Prevalent examples of service levels are: at least 80 percent of the callers are answered within 20 seconds; or, no more than 3 percent of the customers hang-up, due to their impatience, before being served.)

Queuing models also provide qualitative insight, for example identifying the circumstances under which economies of scale prevail, namely that a single large call center is more effective at answering calls than several (distributed) smaller ones; or that cross-selling is beneficial; or that a call center should be quality-driven or efficiency-driven or, most likely, both Quality and Efficiency Driven (abbreviated to QED).

Recently, queuing models have also been used for planning and operating skills-based-routing of calls within a call center, which entails the analysis of systems with multi-type customers and multi-skilled agents.

Call center operations have been supported by mathematical models beyond queuing; for example, for forecasting of calls, for determining shift-structures, and even for analyzing customers' impatience while waiting to be served by an agent.

Accommodation

The centralization of call management aims to improve a company's operations and reduce costs, while providing a standardized, streamlined, uniform service for consumers, making this approach ideal for large companies with extensive customer support needs. To accommodate for such a large customer base, large warehouses are often converted to office space to host all call center operations under one roof.

Personnel management

Centralized offices mean that large numbers of workers can be managed and controlled by a relatively small number of managers and support staff. They are often supported by computer technology that manages, measures and monitors the performance and activities of the workers. Call center staff are closely monitored for quality control, level of proficiency, and customer service. Typical contact center operations focus on the discipline areas of workforce management, queue management, quality monitoring, and reporting. Reporting in a call center can be further broken down into real time reporting and historical reporting. The types of information collected for a group of call center agents typically include: agents logged in, agents ready to take calls, agents available to take calls, agents in wrap up mode, average call duration, average call duration including wrap-up time, longest duration agent available, longest duration call in queue, number of calls in queue, number of calls offered, number of calls abandoned, average speed to answer, average speed to abandoned and service level, calculated by the percentage of calls answered in under a certain time period.

Many call centers use workforce management software, which is software that uses historical information coupled with projected need to generate automated schedules. This aims to provide adequate staffing skilled enough to assist callers.

The relatively high cost of personnel and worker inefficiency accounts for the majority of call center operating expenses, influencing outsourcing in the call center industry. Inadequate computer systems can mean staff take one or two seconds longer than necessary to process a transaction. This can often be quantified in staff cost terms. This is often used as a driving factor in any business case to justify a complete system upgrade or replacement. For several factors, including the efficiency of the call center, the level of computer and telecom support that may be adequate for staff in a typical branch office may prove totally inadequate in a call center.

Technology

Call centers use a wide variety of different technologies to allow them to manage the large volumes of work that need to be managed by the call center. These technologies ensure that agents are kept as productive as possible, and that calls are queued and processed as quickly as possible, resulting in good levels of service.

These include: ACD (automatic call distribution); Agent performance analytics; BTTC (best time to call)/Outbound call optimization; IVR (interactive voice response); CTI (computer telephony integration); Call logger (captures detail of the phone numbers made to and from the center); Enterprise Campaign Management; Outbound predictive dialer; CRM (customer relationship management); CIM (customer interaction management) solutions (Also known as "Unified" solutions); E-mail Management; Chat and Web Collaboration; Desktop Scripting Solutions; TTS (text to speech); WFM (workforce management); Voice analysis; Voice recognition; Voicemail; Voice recording; VoIP, and Speech Analytics.

Call center dynamics

Types of calls are often divided into outbound and inbound. Inbound calls are calls that are made by the consumer to obtain information, report a malfunction, or ask for help. These calls are substantially different from outbound calls, where agents place calls to potential customers mostly with intentions of selling or service to the individual.

Call center staff are often organized into a multi-tier support system for a more efficient handling of calls. The first tier in such a model consists of operators, who direct inquiries to the appropriate department and provide general directory information. If a caller requires more assistance, the call is forwarded to the second tier, where most issues can be resolved. In some cases, there may be three or more tiers of support staff. If a caller requires more assistance, the caller is forwarded to the third tier of support; typically the third tier of support is formed by product engineers/developers or highly skilled technical support staff of the product.

Owing to the highly technological nature of the operations in such offices, the close monitoring of staff activities is easy and widespread. This can be argued to be beneficial, to enable the company to better plan the workload and time of its employees. Some people have argued that such close monitoring breaches human rights to privacy. Yet another argument is that close monitoring and measurement by quantitative metrics can be counterproductive in that it can lead to poor customer service and a poor image of the company, and an ability to keep within the "stats" while still doing horrible things.

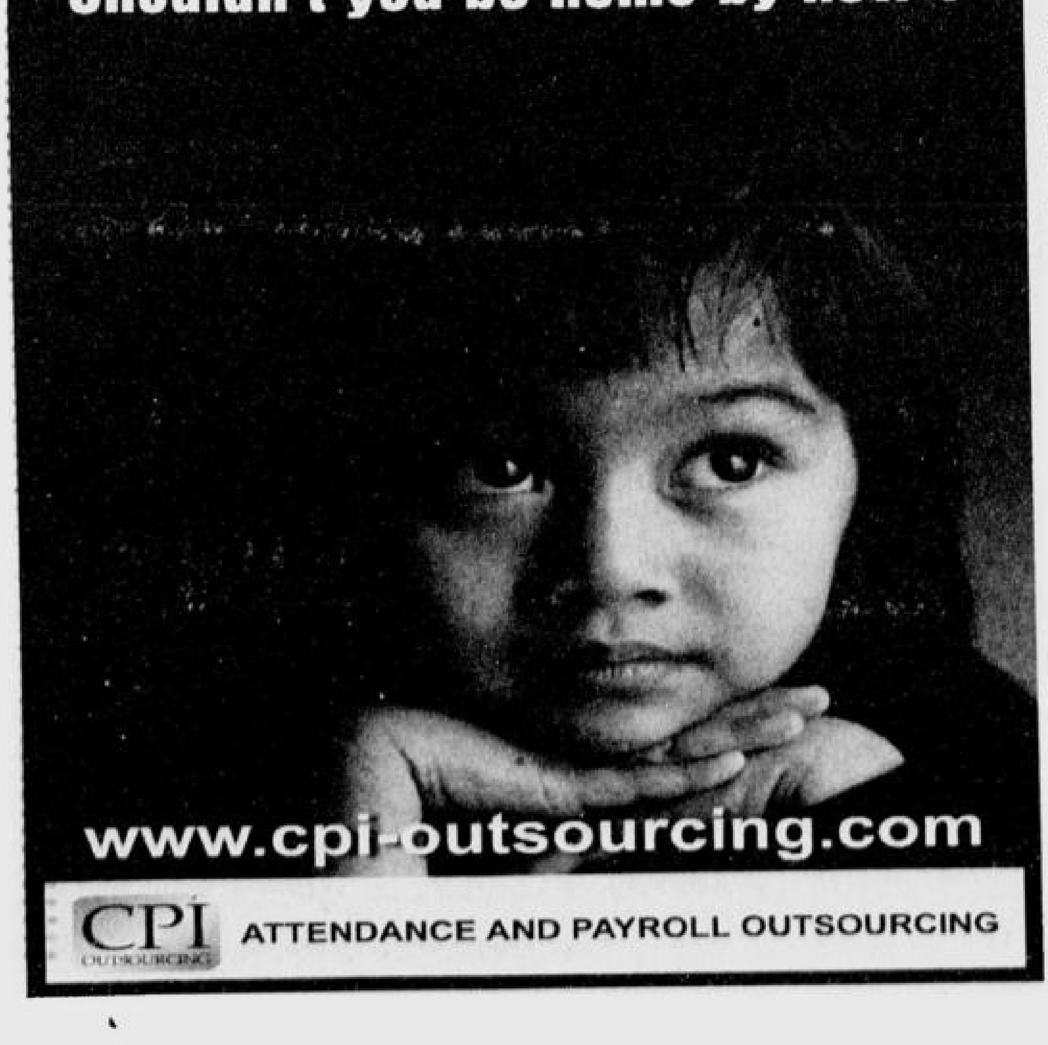
A popular call center site is the Philippines, owing to its abundant English speakers that are college graduates and Americanized when it comes to English accent and cultural affinities. The Philippines was an American colony for almost 50 years. Filipinos are said to be the best outsourcing site outside North America since the accent is nearer to that of American consumers.

For the Asia Pacific region, from India to Australia and New Zealand, Malaysia is emerging as one of the top locations for setting up call centers. The country has a history of ties with the English-speaking world and English-language education, as a former British colony.

Canada is also a popular call centre site, with the relatively low Canadian dollar and low telecommunication rates.

Around the world, there are a number of professional organizations forming to develop and promote call center best practice management and operation, to overcome the negative aspects of a call center. *From http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Call_centers*

Call centers use a wide variety of different technologies to allow them to manage the large volumes of work that need to be managed by the call center. These technologies ensure that agents are kept as productive as possible, and that calls are queued and processed as quickly as possible, resulting in good levels of service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CALL CENTERS HUM WITH ACTIVITY late at night till next morning. As call center agents animatedly talk over the phone, somewhere in the back rooms are employees who feverishly slave over attendance records and paychecks. These are unsung heroes who try their best to meet payroll deadlines either on a weekly or monthly basis. But unfortunately they don't really work the graveyard shift. The volume of data they handle forces them to do so.

The people of Human Resources or Finance are faced with the predicament of working extended hours all year round. They also handle complaints and inquiries of agents who, most often than not, are unforgiving when they feel shortchanged of their paycheck. This led some call center companies to outsource their attendance and payroll processing to companies such as CPI Outsourcing.

CPI Outsourcing is a pioneer in the attendance and payroll outsourcing business. It has full outsourcing packages that meet the tedious and rigorous demands of call centers. It has met and exceeded the varied precise specifications of its call center clients. Its Implementation and Development Group allows it to tailor fit its internally developed software to meet any call center requirement. CPI Outsourcing takes away the arduous tasks of attendance monitoring and payroll processing while providing an extensive line of solid, collaborative and content-driven reports to support the company's decision making process.

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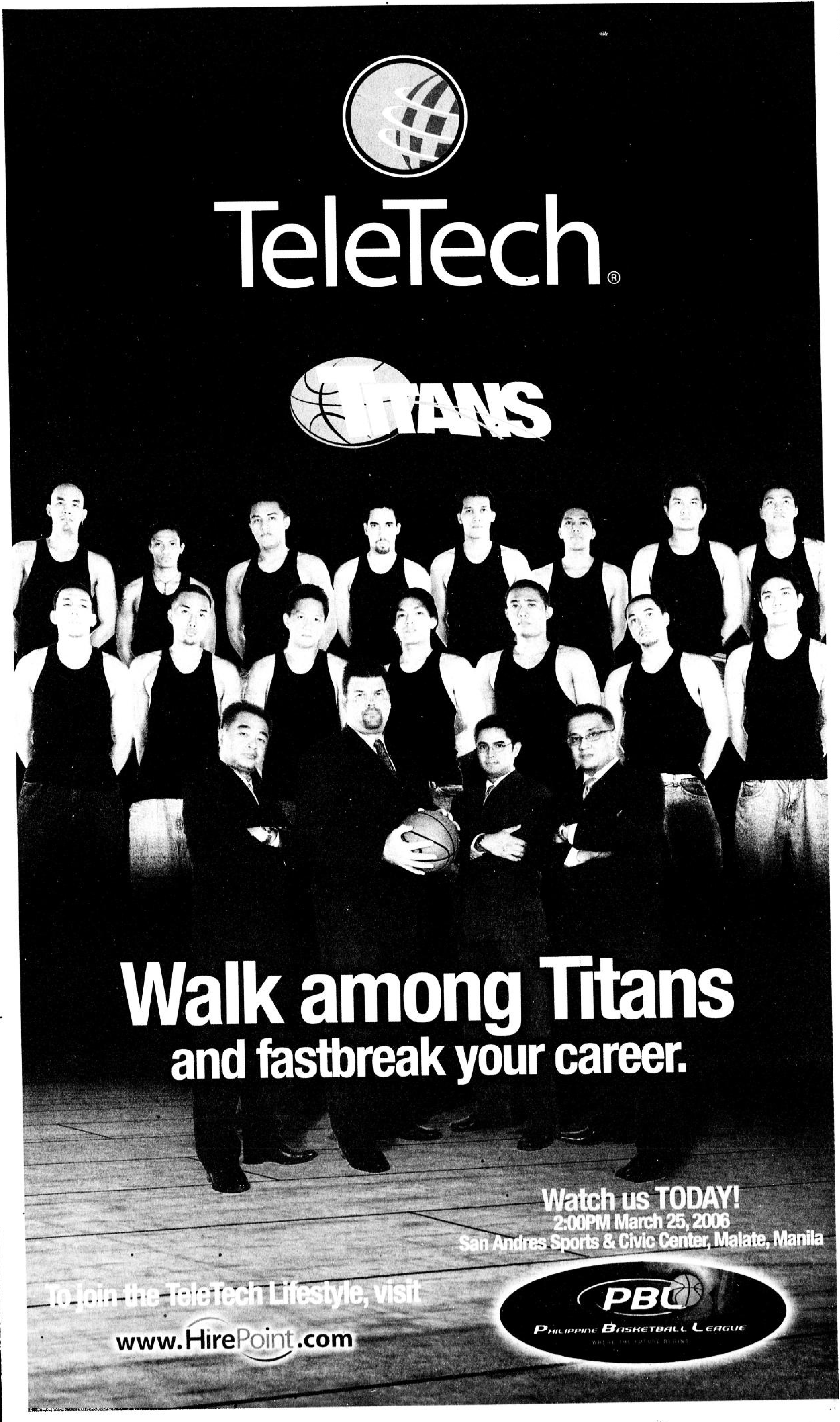
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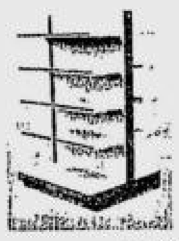

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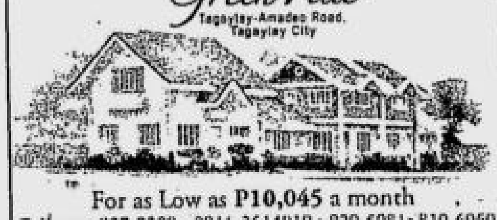

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You are all invited to attend the 61th Annual General Assembly and Election of Officers on Friday, March 31, 2006 at ANG BAHAY NG ALUMNI, UP Campus, UP Diliman, Quezon City. Registration will start at 1:00 p.m. followed by General Assembly and Election of Officers until 5:00 p.m.

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of San Jose, Nueva Ecija

wife of **Gerardo**, mother of **Gerardo Jr.**, **Jose**, **Manuel**, **Ramon**, **Leonor**, **Abelardo**, **Dante**, and **Carlos** (and their spouses).

Together with her grandchildren, great grandchildren and relatives, her children will gladly receive those who wish to condole with them.

6:00 to 11:00 PM, March 24 and
2:00 to 11:00 PM, March 25, 2006
Church of the Risen Lord, UP Campus, Diliman, Q.C.

7:00 to 10:00 AM, March 26, 2006
The United Methodist Church, San Jose, N.E.

Her children agreed to have her remains cremated soon after her death and interred where their father is laid at San Jose.

Her family appreciates flowers, prayer cards, and other expressions of sympathy but requests these be given instead as checks to form part of the family's fund for a professorial chair at U.P. in honor of their parents. Accordingly, kindly write out checks to "U.P. Foundation, Inc." (a not-for-profit institution) for due acknowledgment.

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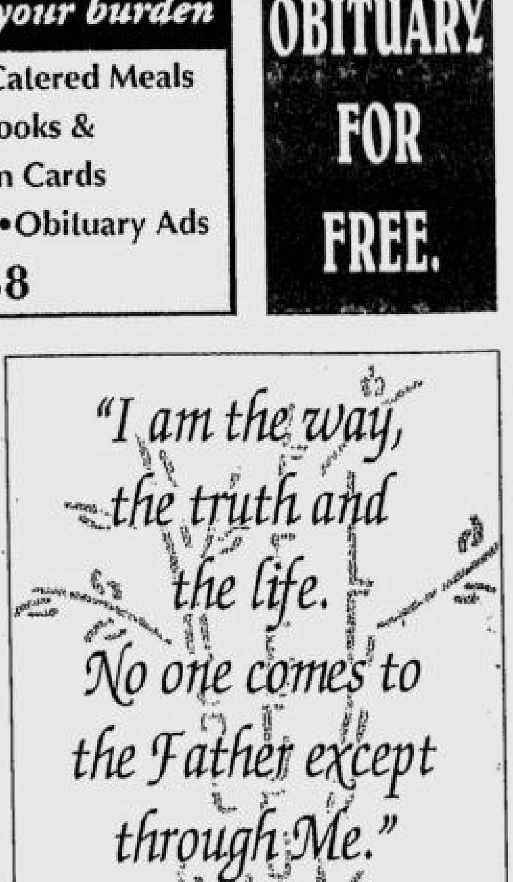

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>
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Wanted: volcano watchers

By Tessa R. Salazar

YOU CAN BE A "VOLcano watcher" and help the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology detect early signs of volcanic eruptions.

The Phivolcs this year launched the Volcano Monitoring and Eruption Prediction Division (VMEPD) that utilizes volunteer watchers to report visual or sensory observations of volcanoes in their localities.

VMEPD chief Ernesto G. Corpuz said volcano watchers would be on the lookout for the volume of the steam emissions, the color of the steam, drying up of vegetation and water wells, unusual animal behavior, ground vibration and rumbling sounds.

Young people preferred

Corpuz said they launched the program after receiving numerous inquiries from high school and college students who wanted to learn more about volcanos.

Volunteers who observe certain changes in their environment are advised to inform the experts at the local Phivolcs observatory.

Corpuz said they preferred younger volunteers who are knowledgeable about the environment as adults have a tendency to exaggerate about what they observe.

Different colors

Corpuz said volcanic emissions could be white, gray, or dark gray. A grayish emission means volcanic ashes are already mixed with the steam. Yellowish or yellowish-brown steam signifies the presence of sulfur dioxide, an indication of magma at the source.

Anecdotal reports would also include unusual animal behavior. Corpuz recounts reports of wild boars fleeing the area days before Mt. Mayon would erupt.

But finding wild boars to observe nowadays, he said, would be difficult because of the scarcity of the animal due to hunting.

Corpuz said anecdotal reports need to be further studied, and should be consistent with other observations.

Magma buildup

Bulges forming around the slopes during the buildup of molten magma in a volcano would most likely be unnoticed, Corpuz said.

"It should be extremely large bulges to be noticeable. In our experience, we haven't seen one. Sometimes, bulges would grow only a few millimeters," he said.

Corpuz said mountainsides that could not expand would crack.

He cited a large crack in Mt. Bulusan that was first seen in the early 20th century. This crack is now the source of this week's explosions. He said Bulusan has a lot of craters, but the crack has seen most activity.

Sensors

Phivolcs director Renato Solidum said ground deformation can be measured by sensors.

He said Mayon has seven sensors, Taal has five, Bulusan, Canlaon and Hibok-Hibok have three sensors each, and Parker and Matutum each have one.

Pinatubo, on the other hand, used to have three sensors but now has one.

Because of Bulusan's heightened activity, Phivolcs is planning to add two more sensors.

Solidum said seismographs are installed at the slopes of volcanoes. The data are sent by radio telemetry to a station at a safe distance from the volcano.

Experts back in S. Leyte for study

A 25-MAN TEAM OF JAPANESE AND Filipino experts visited Guinsaugon, St. Bernard, Southern Leyte, last Thursday to study the landslide that buried the entire village and nearly 1,000 of its residents.

The team took rock samples and will bring these back to Japan to model other possible landslide scenarios.

The team was also planning to conduct laser topographic mapping or scanning.

Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs) director Renato Solidum said the findings will be used to better assess possible landslide areas in the country.

The team is composed of experts from Phivolcs, the Office of Civil Defense and Japanese experts from the International Consortium on Landslides (ICL).

The ICL was formed during the 2002 Kyoto International Symposium and is composed of experts from international, national, scientific, government, nongovernment and academic organizations.

The consortium promotes landslide research, mitigation, education and international coordination, and supports the exchange of information on landslides for the benefit of society and the environment.

Tessa R. Salazar

Mari-Jo P. Ruiz: Outstanding teacher

EUREKA!

Queena N. Lee-Chua

WITHOUT DR. MARI-Jo Ruiz I would never have become a teacher.

After I discussed a solution to a complex problem in our senior graph theory class, Mari-Jo approached me, "You explain well. You should think about teaching here." Startled, I could only nod, but when my theology teacher issued the same invitation an hour later, I knew that even if God had a quirky sense of humor, He sure knew how to get His message across.

With the welfare of the Mathematics and Management Engineering (ME) departments, and later on, the entire Ateneo School of Arts and Sciences in mind, Mari-Jo constantly entices promising students into teaching. For others who request for recommendation letters, she takes care to appraise them well with characteristic generosity. It is a measure of our esteem that she has become *ninang* (godmother) in several weddings, including my own.

Born in Manila on Dec. 1, 1943, Mari-Jo had a happy childhood. On a trip to the US, she witnessed fascinating sights, including those in Japan, which has since become her second home, and in the Panama Canal, whose equalizing locks and water levels she discusses in her Operations Research (OR) classes.

Math instead of physics

In high school at the College of the Holy Spirit (where she would receive the Distinguished Alumna in Education Award in 2001), Mari-Jo was inspired by her physics teacher, Lilia Baltasar, but since physics was not offered in college, she decided to go into math instead. Decades later, Ms Baltasar's son, my batchmate Alan Tantoco, would become Mari-Jo's ME student at the Ateneo.

Mari-Jo continued her studies at Marymount Manhattan College (where she would become Distinguished Alumna in Education in 1986) and later her masteral work at the Courant Institute of the Mathematical Sciences, both in New York.

Through personal diligence and group study, she managed to master math. Because of her initial difficulties with abstract algebra, she understands students who cannot grasp concepts quickly.

"I believe that it is not always the best students who make the best teachers. Those who have experienced some hardship will more likely be better," she said.

As our teacher in abstract algebra, she succeeded in convincing us that theories were nothing to be scared of. No wonder Mari-Jo has garnered her share of teaching awards: 1991 Most Outstanding Senior Lay Teacher of the Ateneo, 1992 Metrobank Foundation Outstanding Teacher, and its 2004 Continuing Excellence and Service Awardee. I also featured Mari-Jo Ruiz in my book "Ten Outstanding Filipino Scientists."

Graph theory

Mari-Jo started teaching in 1965, and in 1981, she received her doctorate in mathematics from the Ateneo.

Together with her good friend, the Japanese graph theorist Jin Akiyama, she helped create the journal Graphs and Combinatorics. In 1991, as president of the Southeast Asian Mathematical Society, she spearheaded the first international Graph Theory and Combinatorics conference in the Philippines.

Mari-Jo also consults for government and corporations, and in 1999, a paper she cowrote on OR for health care delivery was a finalist for an international prize.

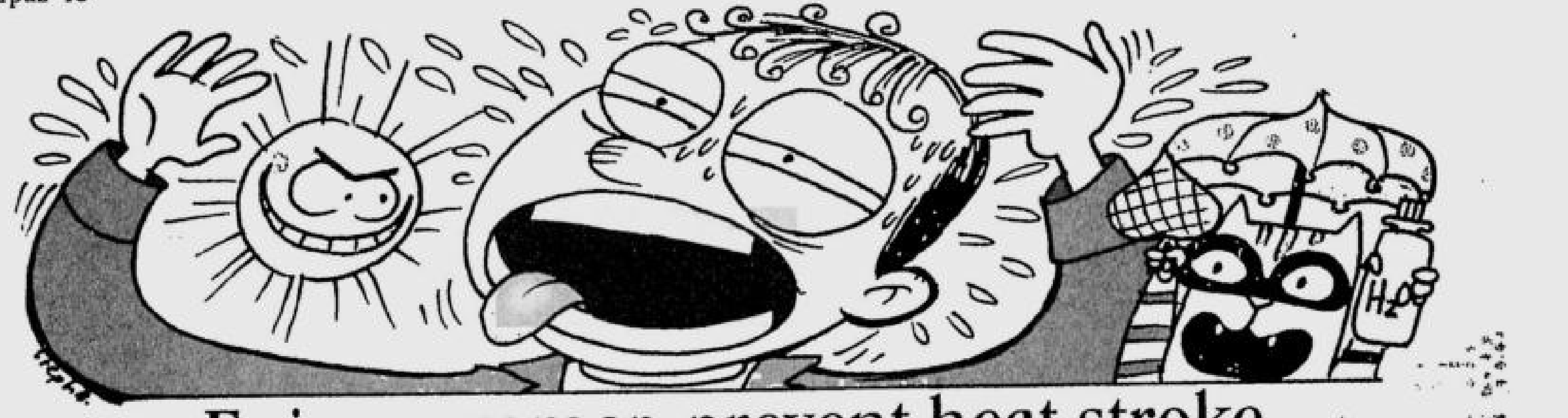
She has been chair of the Math and ME departments, the dean of the School of Arts and Sciences, and now a member of the University Board of Trustees. She takes pride in her three children (Joanna, Judah and Joelle), all Ateneo graduates working in different fields.

She has a wonderful sense of esthetics: she collects frog figures, indulges in reflexology and learns various art forms. Meeting Mari-Jo for the first time in 20 years, a friend marveled, "She has not aged a single day!"

Mari-Jo has found the secrets of youth: a genuine interest in others, a never-ending passion for trying new things, and a wise balance between work and play.

Thank you, Mari-Jo. With your grace and charm, you are my role model.

Next week an international conference on algebra and combinatorics will be held in the Ateneo to honor Dr. Mari-Jo Ruiz, Dr. Jose Marasigan and Dr. Norman Quimpo, three mathematicians who have helped shape our generation.



Enjoy summer, prevent heat stroke

By Rafael R. Castillo, MD

MEDICAL FILES

IT'S SUMMER ONCE AGAIN AND the temperature is reaching scorching levels. Many people look forward to frolicking under the sun in many of our lovely beaches. While some sun can cause a healthy tan on the skin, excessive exposure without proper hydration might lead to heat stroke, which is potentially life-threatening.

A few summers ago in Boracay, a sunbathing foreigner complained of dizziness and headache to his companion, who asked for help from the locals who were massaging some clients nearby. They immediately carried him to a shaded area and performed the necessary first-aid measures. My service was hardly necessary. They probably had more experience in handling heat stroke than I.

People working in beaches, golf courses and other sun-exposed areas must be aware of the signs and symptoms of heat stroke and how to attend to victims.

Like car radiator

Why does heat stroke happen? Our bodies generate a tremendous amount of heat inside and the body normally cools itself by sweating and radiating heat through the skin. But under extreme heat, high humidity or vigorous activity under the hot sun, this cooling system falters, and the heat generated in the body builds up to dangerous levels.

The situation is similar to a car radiator that has run out of water. A person who becomes dehydrated and cannot sweat enough to cool his body has a high risk of developing heat stroke.

One should have a high index of suspicion that a person might be developing heat stroke if he presents with several of these symptoms:

- Headache
- Dizziness
- Disorientation, agitation or confusion
- Sluggishness or fatigue
- Seizure
- Hot, dry skin that is flushed but not sweaty
- High body temperature
- Loss of consciousness
- Rapid heart beat
- Hallucinations

First aid

If a person is suspected to be developing heat stroke, those around him should act promptly. It's better to be aggressive and err on the safe side than be passive until the person develops seizures and other late symptoms. Heat stroke can cause permanent brain damage or even death. Here are some first aid measures one can take while waiting for help to arrive.

- Get the person indoors or under a shaded area.
- Remove thick clothing and gently apply cool water (preferably ice water) to the skin, then fan the body to stimulate sweating.
- Apply ice packs to the groin and armpits.
- Have the person lie down with his feet slightly elevated to promote more blood flow to the heart and brain since the blood pressure might be critically low.

If the patient is conscious, ask him to drink as much water as possible. If he is drowsy or half-conscious, don't force fluids into the mouth because he might aspirate the fluids into the lungs which can cause more problems. In these patients, intravenous fluids are often necessary to compensate for fluid or electrolyte loss.

Bed rest is generally advised and in severe cases, body temperature may fluctuate abnormally for weeks after a heat stroke.

If you're planning a holiday on the beach, remember these precautions:

- Drink plenty of fluids during outdoor activities. Water and sports drinks are the drinks of choice; avoid tea, coffee, soda and alcohol as these can lead to dehydration.
- Wear thin, loose-fitting clothing in light colors.
- Schedule vigorous activity and sports during cooler times of the day.
- Protect yourself from the sun by wearing a hat, sunglasses and using an umbrella.
- Gradually increase time spent outdoors to get your body used to the heat.
- During outdoor activities, take frequent drink breaks and mist yourself with a spray to avoid becoming overheated.
- Try to spend as much time indoors as possible on very hot and humid days.

Smoking ups risk of impotence

FORGET THE MARLBORO man—new research shows that smoking, often marketed as a symbol of virility, increases the risk of impotence.

"Men who smoke are up to 40 percent more likely to suffer from impotence than those who don't," said Dr Christopher Millett, of Imperial College London, who worked on the research.

He said the more cigarettes smoked, the greater one's risk is of suffering from a sexual performance problem. Even men who smoked less than 20 cigarettes a day, had a 24 percent raised risk of impotence.

"It is not just older men who suffer from impotence, younger men are also affected as well," Millett said.

The findings, reported in the journal Tobacco Control, are based on a survey of 8,000 men in Australia aged between 16 and 59.

Impotence was defined as having had trouble keeping an erection when the individual wanted to, and also as a problem that had persisted for at least one month over the previous year.

1 in 10

Almost one in 10 reported an impotence problem lasting more than a month during the previous year. About a quarter were smokers and more than 6 percent said they got through over 20 cigarettes a day.

Men who smoked more than a pack or more a day were 39 percent more likely to report sexual problems, according to the study.

"For decades, cigarettes were marketed as symbol of virility, as in the macho Marlboro Man ads," said Deborah Arnott, of the anti-smoking group Action on Smoking and Health.

"Yet the reality is that smoking is a primary cause of impotence which may also be an early indicator of coronary heart disease," she added.

Preventable death

Research has shown that smoking is a leading cause of preventable death. It increases the risk of heart attack and stroke, respiratory problems, lung and other types of cancer.

Millett said if young men want to avoid the embarrassment and distress of impotence they should not smoke.

"By highlighting this link between smoking and erectile problems, we may be able to motivate these men to quit," he added.

Previous studies have shown that nicotine and other toxic chemicals diminish blood flow to the penis and blood pressure in it.

Reuters, AFP

BUSINESS

SuperFerry cuts fares to spur local travel

By Daxim L. Lucas

THE COUNTRY'S LARGEST PASsenger ship operator will cut its fares by up to half during the summer travel season as part of its plan to encourage more travel to domestic destinations.

In a press statement, SuperFerry—a unit of the Aboitiz Transport System—said it has extended its discounted fare promo into a year-long program, that will see its fares cut by as much as half in all destinations nationwide.

"The program called Mega Tipid Trip is in line with SuperFerry's 'low-cost, high-value' market proposition and meant to encourage more people to travel and visit family and relatives during the summer season," the company said.

Under the year-long program, SuperFerry guaranteed to cut its ticket prices to all its ports of call.

The company's fare promo follows a highly successful scheme introduced by low cost airline Cebu Pacific Air, which offered P10 airfare for travel to any of its domestic destinations during the July-October off-peak season.

In SuperFerry's case, a summer season ticket to Bacolod, for example, will now cost as low as P1,200, inclusive of security fee, fuel surcharge and 12-percent VAT, from its previous rate of over P2,000.

Ticket prices to other top destinations, like Cebu and Roxas/Dumaguit, are now priced at as low as P1,010 and P999, respectively.

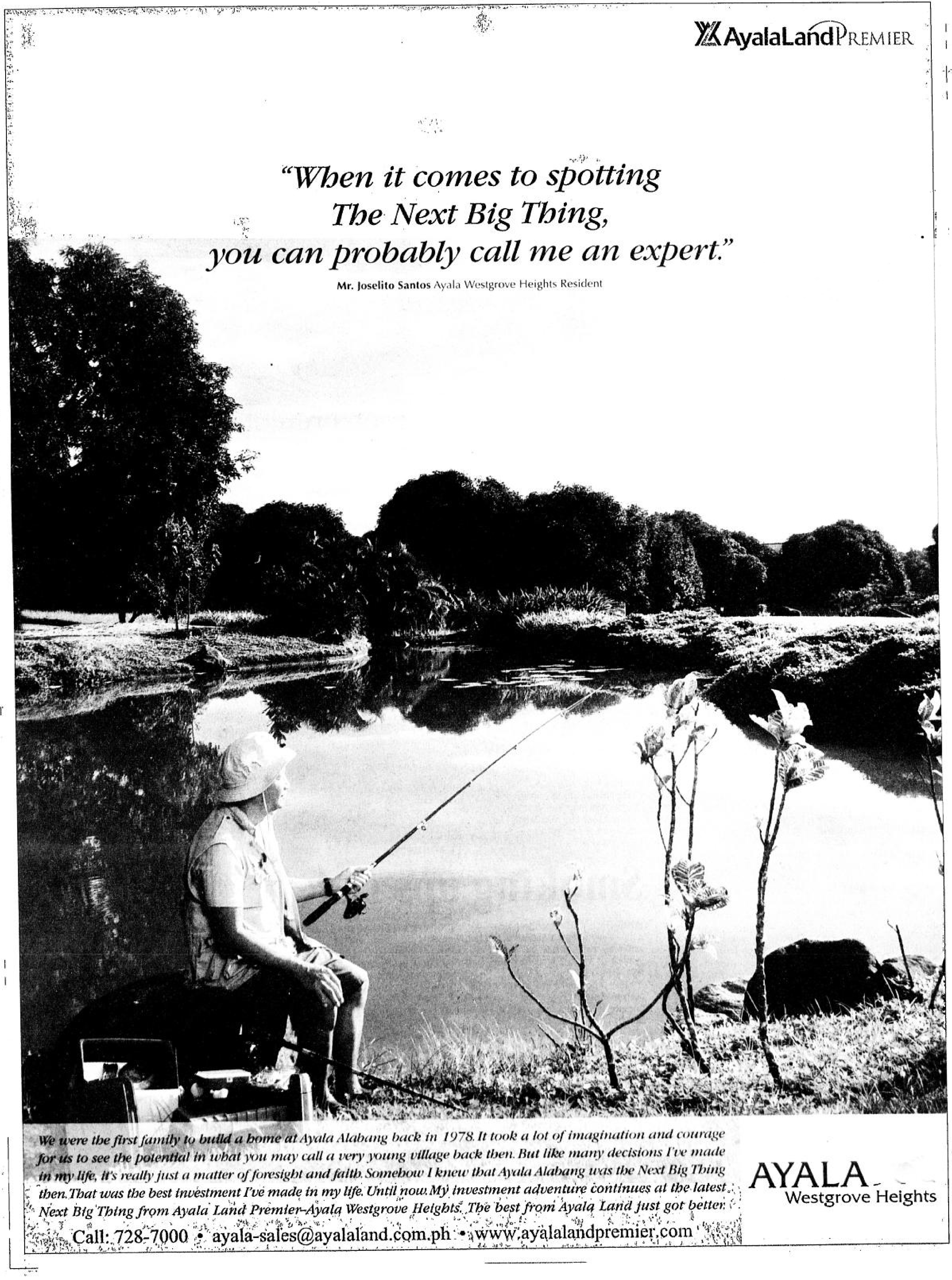
SuperFerry assistant vice president for sales and marketing Andrew Deyto said the program was in response to the increased competition for share of wallet of consumers who usually defer travel plans to manage their budgets.

"With the Mega Tipid Trip program, we are giving the consumers a good reason to travel and enjoy the different island destinations in the country," he said.

By making sea travel more affordable, it is also the perfect opportunity to continue the Filipino tradition of visiting family and friends in the provinces and take a much needed break from the busy city life," Deyto added.

As an added convenience to passengers, SuperFerry offers free shuttle services in major ports like Bacolod, Dumaguit, Roxas and Iloilo, which also meant less travel expenses for the passengers.

"SuperFerry passengers coming from the outlying towns can take our free shuttle service going to our ports and vise versa upon their return, instead of riding a public or private vehicle to reach or leave our ports," he said. "The free shuttle is part of our enhanced service to make riding the SuperFerry accessible to more people coming from the outlying towns and barangays in the major cities nationwide."



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Mr. Joselito Santos Ayala Westgrove Heights Resident

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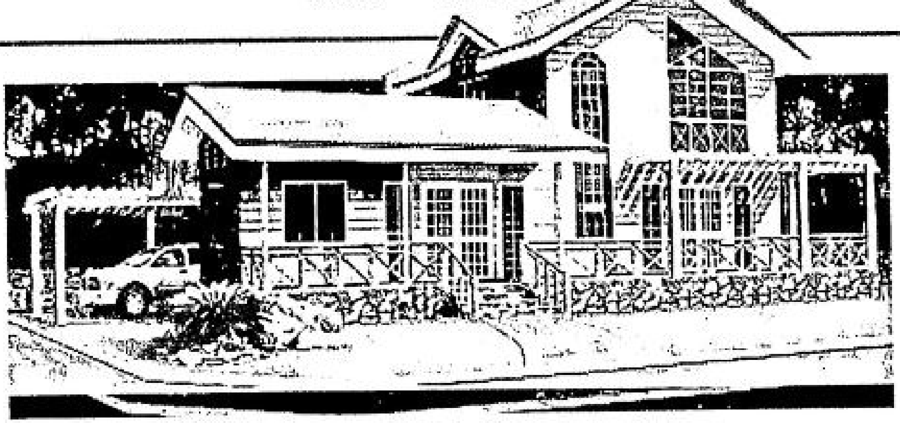
AYALA Westgrove Heights

Editor **Cesar D. Mangawang**

PROPERTY

Build houses and sell them for a profit by keeping construction costs down

38-sq m floor area and 80-sq m lot area at P1.4 million (location: boundary of Alfonso, Cavite and Tagaytay)



213 lot area, 148.6-sq m floor area at P5.4million

Build 3 houses for P1.8M, sell for P7.5M

By Tessa R. Salazar

YOU CAN BUILD single detached houses for P1.875 million, and then sell them for P7.5 million.

What's more, you can do this on a seemingly hopeless piece of real estate. Real estate developer Demetrio L. Posadas believes that if you own, for example, a dilapidated house on a 300-square-meter lot in high-density areas such as Sampaloc, Sta. Mesa, Lepanto, or in areas near Manila's University Belt, you can do wonders with it.

Posadas, president of Steel Building Systems and Technologies, said the light-gauge steel framing system that he imported from New Zealand three years ago, is ideal for "pocket" development multistory houses as well as big rest houses.

Using the steel framing system, lightweight concrete (with a fire rating of two to three hours), tiles on the ground floor, laminated wood on the second floor, a prepainted long-span steel tile, or a prepainted rib-type, a two-story house can be constructed precisely—up to the last frame detail—with the aid of computerization.

Keeping costs down

Using his technology and aided by computer, Posadas is able to keep his construction costs down to P12,500 per square meter, and finish three single-detached houses in two to three months (each two-story house having a 25-sq-m ground floor and a 25-sq-m second floor).

By comparison, "conventional construction could cost P16,000 per sq m, and would be finished in eight months," he said.

Each house would be sold for P1 million (P3 million for three houses). He added that the acceptable selling rate of a house would be P20,000 per sq m.

Posadas estimated that a typical lot in high-density areas in Manila would cost P15,000 per sq m.

Selling at a profit

Each house on a 100-sq-m lot would, therefore, sell for P2.5 million. A 300-sq-m property with three houses (at 50 sq m each) would sell for P7.5 million.

Posadas said the technology was used in his Tagaytay village, Malayabalay, Bukidnon subdivision, Habitat for Humanity in Vaseco, Cebu, La Union and Pangasinan as well as classrooms for the GMA Kapuso Foundation in Quezon, Nueva Ecija and Pinugay, Rizal, among others.

His company has developments spanning nationwide. He had tried various types of conventional construction technologies, until he came across the Scottsdale steel framing system.

His port container can ship housing frames in the provinces. "To call it a (viable) technology, it should be used in any part of the country and made available in any remote area," he said.

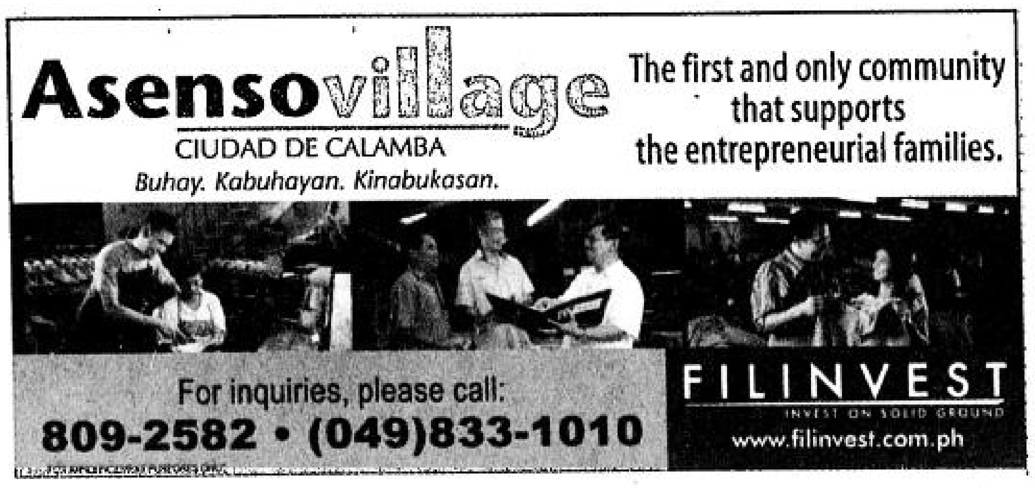
Architect Boy Morcilla, vice president of Steel Building Systems and Technologies, said that from bagasse walls (made from sugarcane), the company's technology has evolved into cement boards and now lightweight concrete.

The lightweight concrete's strength can be adjusted as low as 500 psi or as high as 2000 psi depending on the requirement. Hollow blocks can only withstand 350 psi, said Morcilla.

Structural soundness

The company's team of engineers conducts structural studies and computes wind velocities before starting the construction process. The team utilizes computer models for structural soundness. The structural design is submitted to building officials and approved by the city engineers.

Posadas said the technology would be a perfect testing ground for small entrepreneurs and would-be developers who would want to avoid the increasing material costs in the middle of the construction process.



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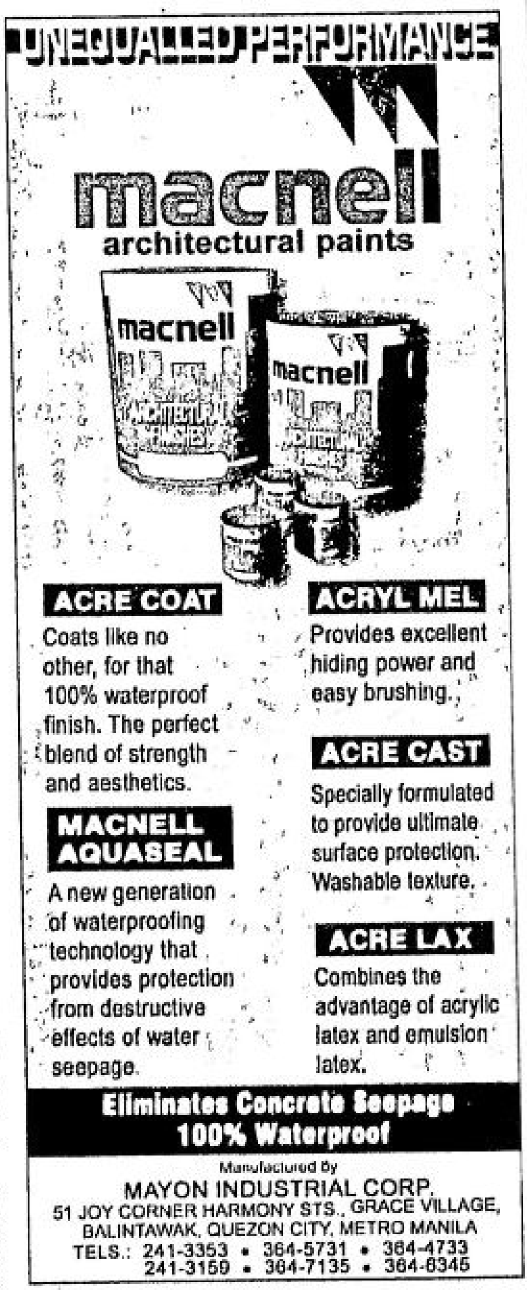

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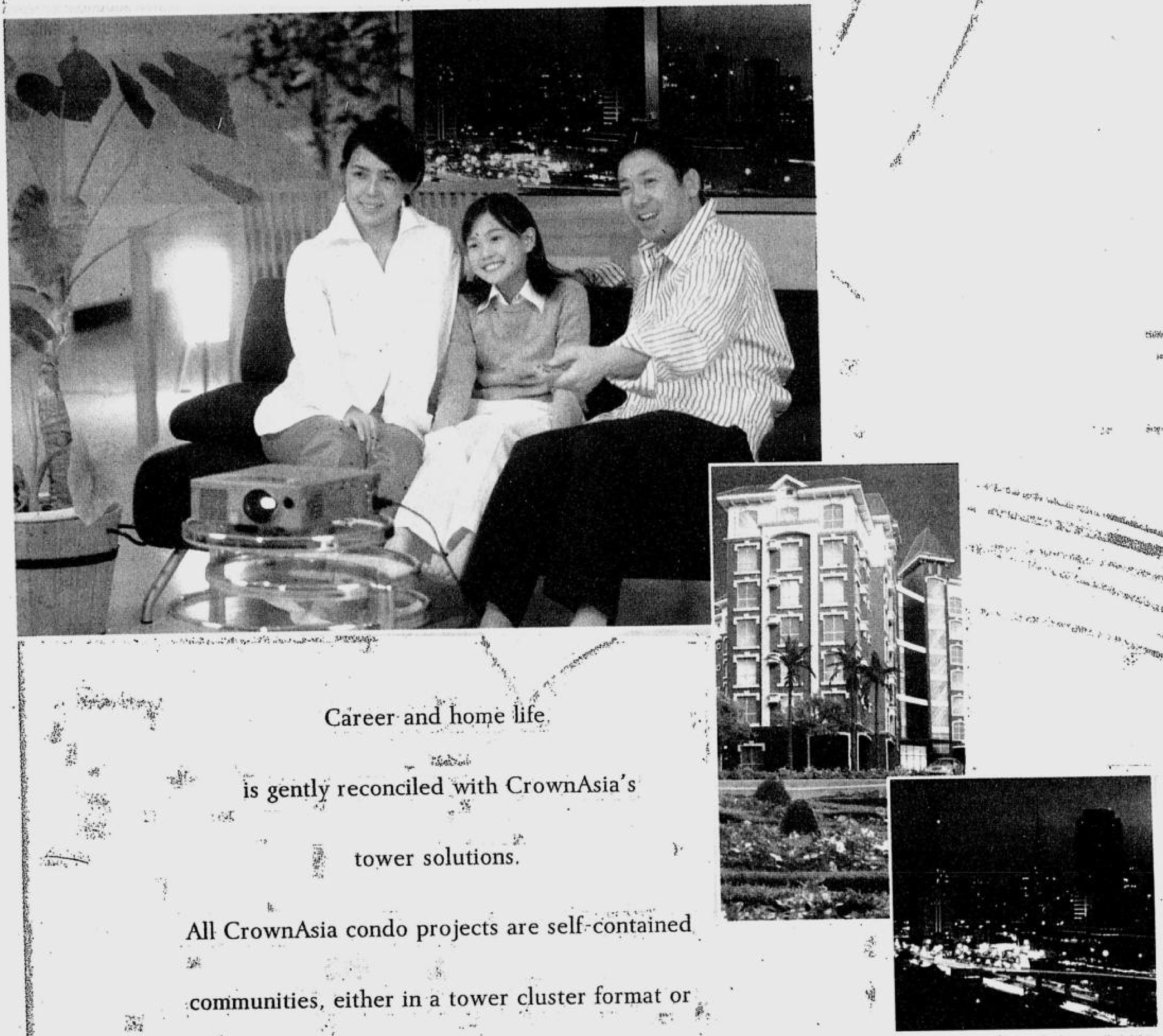
GENTLE SKYLINES



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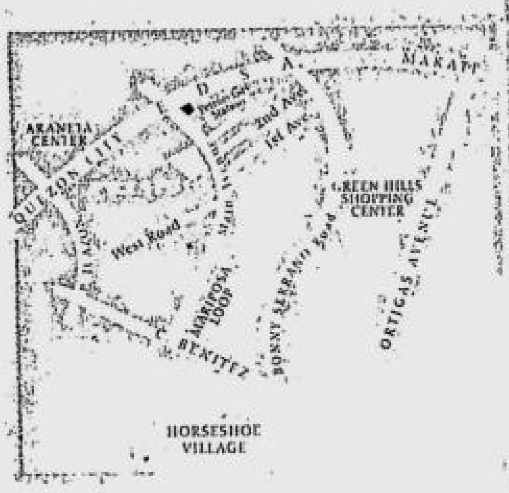
CrownAsia unveils a New Manila signature project

The value system that honed Crown Asia to become the nation's biggest home builder in 10 years likewise shapes its ardent entry into condo development.

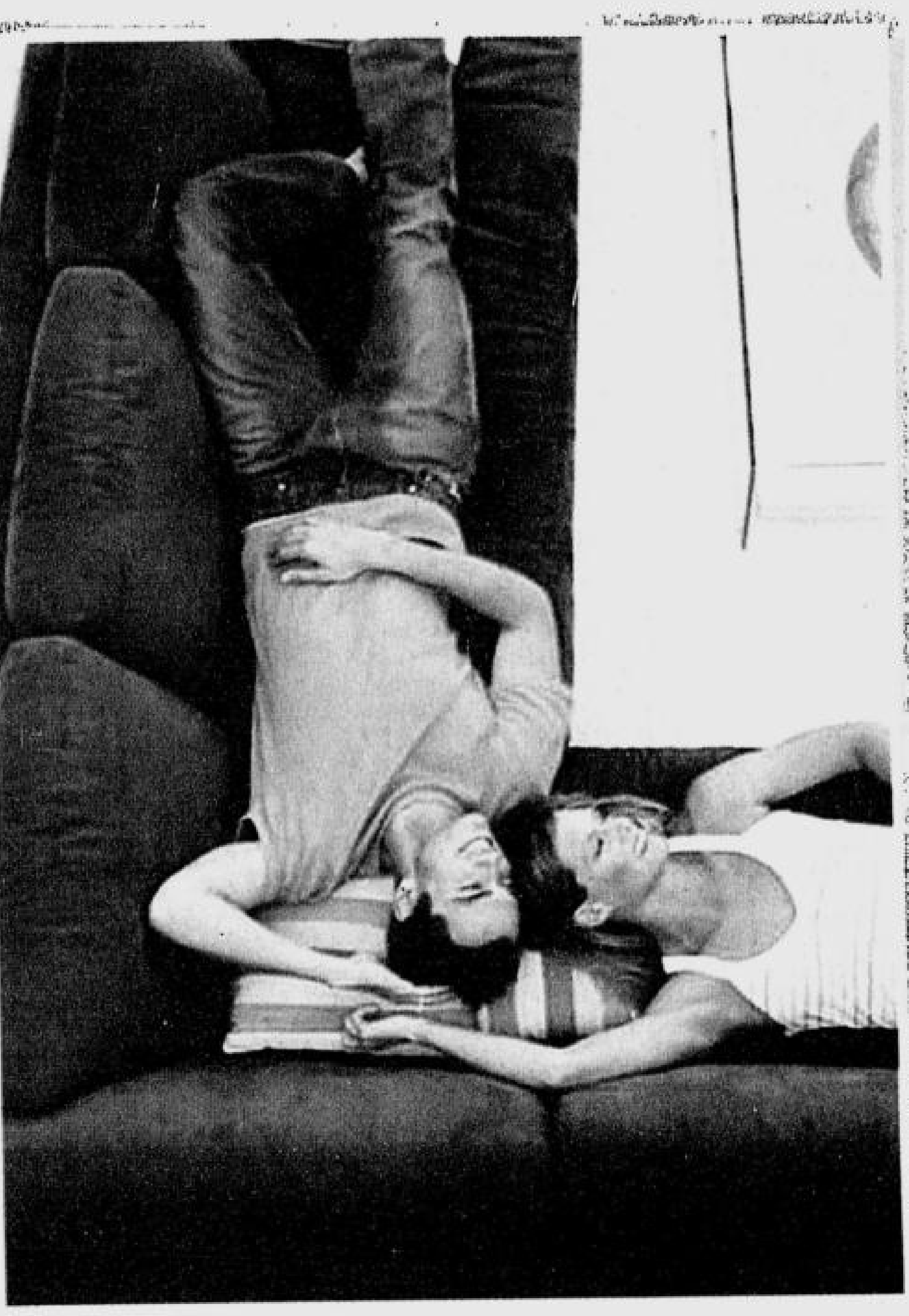
The immediate radius of the new Crown Presidio speaks of gracious surrounding enclaves; Greenhills, Horseshoe Village, Mariposa, C. Benitez. As such, CrownAsia's development of this new cluster project can only be a signature piece to stand out in the area. Genteel architecture, luxuriant landscaping and practical support amenities.



New Manila still retains the "rarified air" charm of the 50's, when prominent old Manila families left their war ravaged community to move to a new city, named after Manuel L. Quezon. The lot sizes then ranged from 1,000 square meters to quarter of a hectare. Tree-lined avenues became a landmark feature. Stately homes and mansions defined the area with an aura of wealth, prominence and privilege.

New Manila offers unbeatable advantages for the career focused individuals and young families. The Bonny Serrano MRT station is a few blocks away; Greenhills Center, a short drive. A quick u-turn on EDSA and the Araneta Center, with its new upmarket shopping, dining and entertainment offerings is a time saving option. And down Bonny Serrano, past White Plains, is Eastwood City.

GENTLESKYLINES™



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CROWN Presidio New Manila. City–centered living. Only CrownAsia's radar puts you right in the center of Mega Manila; high style, high rise living in the heart of Quezon City, echoing San Francisco style, fashion and environmental sensitivity.

Flanked by major lifestyle destinations: Greenhills, Araneta Center and Libis. Technically on Main Avenue and just a zip away from Greenhills and Horseshoe! Only minutes away is EDSA with a convenient u–turn back to Araneta Center via Main Avenue or via Bonny Serrano past White Plains to Libis.

Amenities to ease the stress. Community home theater, game room, event place, linear park, sun deck and meditation garden. There are even provisions for concessionaire–leased commercial areas / convenience shops, fitness gym, laundromat.

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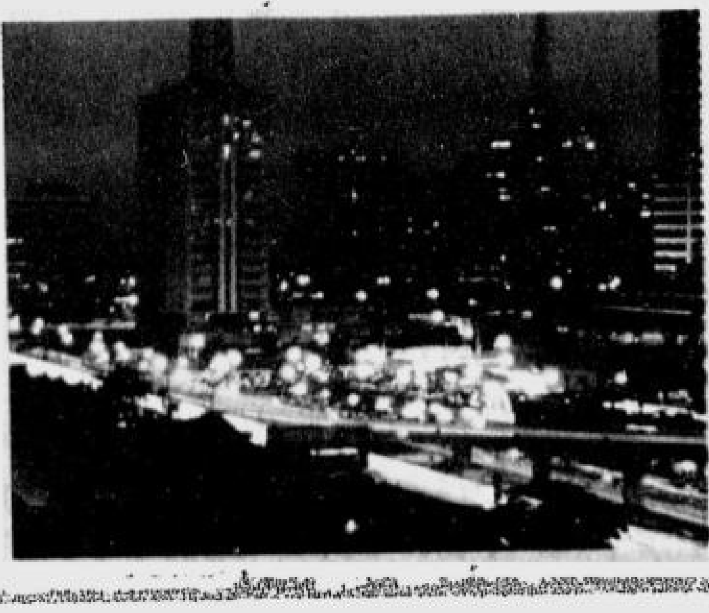
Breaking through the clutter of Manila's concrete jungle.

The skyline of Mega Manila is changing so fast, the eyes have to gaze upward. CrownAsia, the maverick home builder, cuts through the clutter with cluster developments starting with PRESIDIO by the Bay. PRESIDIO has delighted buyers not only in the Philippines but also abroad, with the winning formula of being a self-contained community.



Wood a green building material

WOOD IS THE ONLY RENEWABLE building material in the world. Not only can it be recycled, it can also be regenerated. In addition, while trees are growing they provide environmental benefits absorbing carbon dioxide and releasing oxygen. Wood contributes much less greenhouse gas emissions than steel and concrete.

Wood has a unique combination of features such as strength, affordability and ease of use. This is probably why the use of wood as a building material has a long history. Some pile dwellings have been found to date back more than 5,000 years.

Wood frame construction is safe, sturdy, reliable and an environmentally superior building material.

Wood has excellent insulating properties against heat and cold, thus making it most energy-efficient that can help keep utility costs down. Wood does not conduct heat and cold unlike steel and concrete, so homes built with wood require less energy to heat and cool.

Wood is easy to use. Using some of the most basic tools in construction, wood can be used to simplify construction whether for residential or commercial applications.

Wood is the most affordable building material. This is one of the main reasons it is a popular material for house construction in many countries.

GREEN ARCHITRENDS

Amado de Jesus

Philippine situation

Due to the dwindling supply of wood in the country, the price of wood has gone up while the quality has gone down.

This situation can be traced back to the last four decades when our forest reserves steadily declined leading to ecological degradation and rural poverty. In 1950 our forests covered an area of 15 million hectares. Today it has been reduced to 4.7 million hectares. Out of this, only 800,000 hectares are primary forests.

The Philippines is classified as one of the most severely deforested countries in the tropics.

Reforestation development has been moving at a very slow pace resulting in the decline of wood supply. This has made the country a net importer of wood.

In response to this alarming situation, the Philippines has adopted the concept of sustainable forest management to ensure the long-term stability of its forest resources. It aims to reverse the current trend of deforestation in the country.

What is sustainable forest management?

It is the process of managing forests to achieve specific objectives of management regarding the production of forest products and services without reducing their values and future productivity and without undesirable effects on the physical and social environment.

The American experience

We can probably learn from the American experience, when their forest reserves declined sharply in the 1800s due to unrestricted clearing of land for agriculture and logging for growing urban and industrial sites. This resulted in the clearing of a huge area of the old growth forests.

This critical condition resulted in the creation of laws enacted to protect the remaining forests. Since then the country has shifted its stance from the "sustainable yield" mentality which emphasizes that the timber harvest cannot exceed the rate at which it is replaced, to a more comprehensive emphasis on recreation and protection of ecosystems. In 1993, the United States committed to achieve sustainable forest management by the year 2000.

Innovation

A technical innovation that is now gaining popularity in North America and may be a good solution for our shortage of wood is the use of oriented strand board (OSB) for sheathing and floor panels. These board panels are made of compressed wood strands arranged in perpendicular layers and bonded with resin.

The system is designed to minimize waste in the manufacture of building materials in which it is common practice in the wood industry that 50 to 75 percent of trees cut down is wasted in sawing, dimensioning, milling, etc.

Another advantage with the system is that the resulting wood composite is structurally homogenous and free from the normal defects like voids, splits, knots and other natural deformities.

Environmental concerns

A big concern of the wood industry is the proliferation of many building products made of synthetic materials. Many of these materials are highly affordable and easily available in many parts of the country. The major drawback is that most of them are harmful to the environment.

In some cases, even if wood is specified and used in a project it does not mean that the project can be considered a green project. Several years ago, a high-end development project was built claiming that all their wood panels and boards were imported. This type of practice does not sit well with environmentalists who claim that even natural materials like wood that need to be transported over great distances to where they will be used, consume a lot of capital and energy.

Most of these products have a high embodied energy. This means energy needed to extract the raw material, manufacture, transport, assemble, demolish and eventually discard the material.

LARGE trees and extensive landscaping in urban areas can provide shade and natural cooling to reduce the "urban heat-island effect" which contributes to global warming.

Builders' dilemma

Perhaps, the most important reason many people in this country are using less wood these days is that they have no idea about the nature or background of the wood.

What is its classification? Is it obtained locally from sustainable or environmentally responsible methods? Is it imported from halfway around the globe at a considerable cost in ecological terms? Is it durable for the type of construction being contemplated?

Ecological certification

It will be a big help for the building industry if an ecological certification system can be adopted so that different species of wood can be classified as to its origin, strength and whether it has been obtained from sustainable forests. The system, hopefully, will enable consumers to identify products that are harvested without damaging the environment.

In many advanced countries, the topic of wood certification is a hotly debated issue. In the Philippines, as far as one can remember, lawmakers, loggers, developers and the public have all been debating on the best course to take for the protection of our forests.

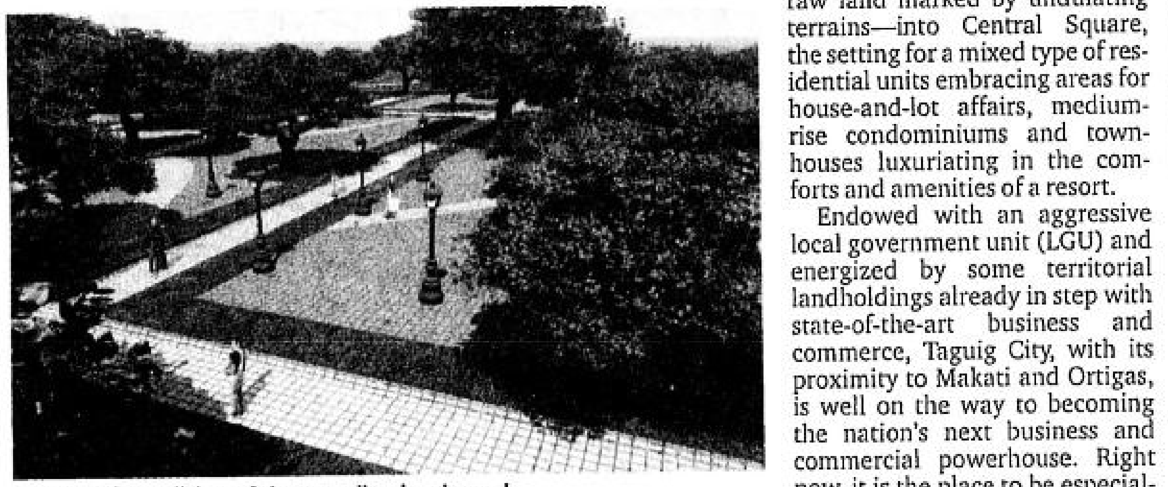
It is imperative to take action now as we are at a critical threshold in the life of our forests. Experts warn that loss of more than 70 percent of an ecosystem makes it difficult for the remainder to sustain the environment needed for our own survival.

For comments or inquiries, e-mail amadodejesus@gmail.com.

DMCI brings Taguig development to higher level

IT CAN BE SAID THAT DMCI Homes is elegantly dressing up Taguig for the day—and it's not too far—when the city finally realizes its full promise as the next Makati.

When the place was still largely made up of rice paddies and duck ponds, DMCI Homes, the famed builder of national landmarks and resort-type residential communities, saw its potential. Back in the '70s, the patriarch of construction titan D.M. Consunji invested on huge tracts of land in the area near the proposed sites of Circumferential Roads 5 and 6, right across where The Fort Global City is now.



ARTIST'S rendition of the tree-line boulevard

ARTIST'S rendition of the lifestyle avenue

Central Square

DMCI Homes, D.M. Consunji's real estate arm, has long begun the process of converting these investments—150 hectares of raw land marked by undulating terrains—into Central Square, the setting for a mixed type of residential units embracing areas for house-and-lot affairs, medium-rise condominiums and townhouses luxuriating in the comforts and amenities of a resort.

Endowed with an aggressive local government unit (LGU) and energized by some territorial landholdings already in step with state-of-the-art business and commerce, Taguig City, with its proximity to Makati and Ortigas, is well on the way to becoming the nation's next business and commercial powerhouse. Right now, it is the place to be especially for the young, upwardly mobile shirt-and-tie crowd.

By the time Taguig's coming out party as the nation's other premier business address rolls along, DMCI Homes will have already developed a community ready to meet the myriad needs and concerns of its chic and young market.

THE ARCHETYPAL waterways as conceptualized by the artist

Ultimate urban village

"The dream," says DMCI Homes managing director Alfredo Austria, "is to create the ultimate urban village near Makati. Residential in makeup for the larger part, Central Square will be characterized by small-town charms like landscaped boulevards, village parks, water fun and natural features and a central community where neighborhood establishments abound."

As the company envisions it, Central Square will be a turn-of-the-century macro-residential development made up of micro-communities that are equally unique yet collectively distinctive as to comprise one homogenous residential community. Austria believes the vision is bold but totally feasible as well.

Positive feedbacks

"We've been receiving positive feedbacks from our growing registry of homeowners about the mid-rise-condos-cum-resort residences that our company had pioneered not so long ago," Austria says. "Now, DMCI Homes is now ready to bring this type of community development to the next level where instead of pocket communities, we'll build a full-scale urban village composed of micro resort-residential communities. We're all excited about this project. It may reinvent yet again the concept of an urban village as we know it," he says.

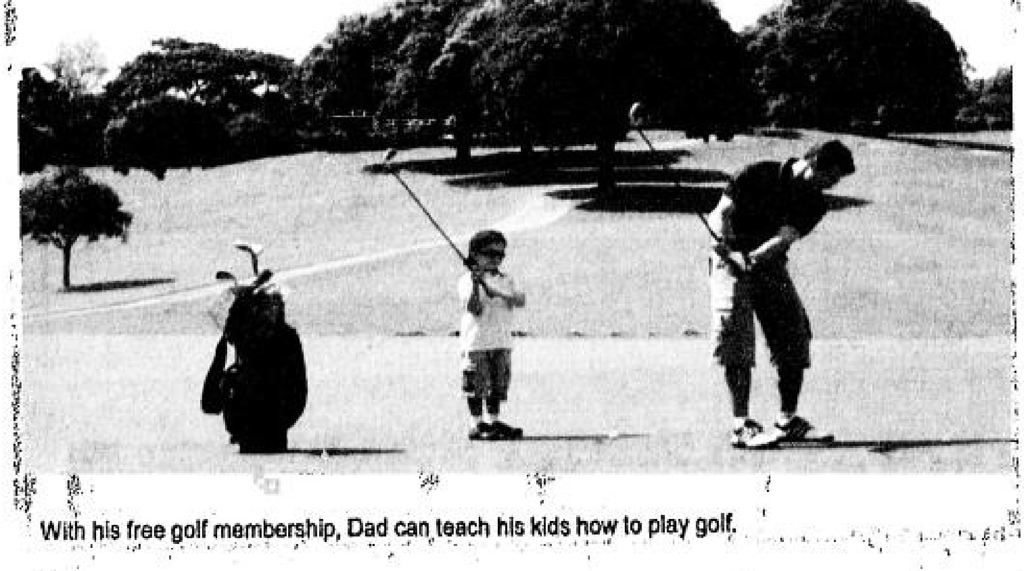
Altogether, Central Park will house 16 housing residential communities. DMCI Homes, according to Austria, launched in the fourth quarter of 2005 the first of these, a house-and-lot development called The Mahogany Place. Within this year, a pair of condominium developments, Cypress Towers and Rosewood Pointe, go up next.

Refreshing visualization

Already, the blueprint for the company's urban village is creating a totally refreshing visualization of the perfect in-city residential community, one which strikes an ideal balance between location, price and quality of development. It shows the wonders and uniqueness of its features which include lifestyle avenues, archetypal waterways, village parks, the Village Centrale and tree-lined boulevards.

There are a host of other things to behold and marvel at inside Central Park. When it finally opens its gates to its homeowners, it will be opening as well the doors to the ultimate in urban living.

South Forbes: Right at the Center of UNIVERSITY TOWN



With his free golf membership, Dad can teach his kids how to play golf.

Parents and soon-to-be parents who are looking for the best location for their new home must also consider one major factor to their decision making: Are there top schools beside their new residence?

As a parent, you don't have to look any further for a residence in the serene South that's near top schools. South Forbes, located in Metro Sta. Rosa, is right at the center of the new University Town.

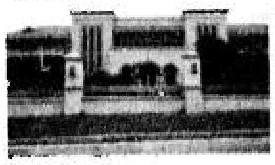
St. Scholastica's College is at one end of South Forbes. Don Bosco and De La Salle University-Canlubang are five minutes away. The new campus of University of Sto. Tomas will take just a short ride. Ateneo holds graduate school classes in nearby Paseo De Sta. Rosa.

Brent International School is just at the next exit, at Mamplasan. Not to forget, South Forbes also has its own pre-school, Learning Links Academy of Sta. Rosa. University of Asia & the Pacific as well as Xavier School will be opening their campuses soon.

Since your home at South Forbes will just be near school – without the hassle of Metro traffic – your whole family can spend more quality time together. Go for some swimming at the Clubhouse. Take a stroll at the nearby pocket park. Dine at your favorite corner restaurant. Best of all, with his free South Forbes golf membership, dad can even teach your kids how to play golf!

De La Salle's expansive campus is just beside South Forbes.

St. Scholastica's College is at one end of South Forbes



Mamplasan Exit
Sta. Rosa Exit
Ali-Greenfield Exit
To Makati
Brent School
To Calamba
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Coke
Toyota
Panasonic
Laguna Technopark
LAGUNA BLVD
Caltex
Paseo de Sta. Rosa Mall
Jollibee
De La Salle University
Don Bosco
Rustan's
SOUTH FORBES
METRO STA. ROSA
St. Scholastica's College
Ayala Westgrove Heights
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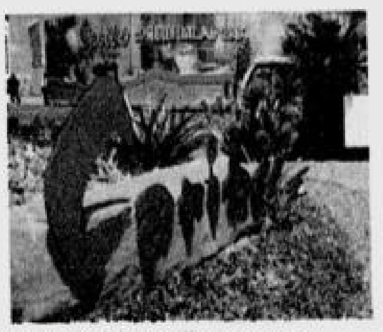
LADIES in their vibrant costumes add to Caribé's tropical inspired launch.

TAKE a tour of The Islands to appreciate the beauty of island living.



A LANDSCAPED entrance welcomes future residents to the Caribbean-Floridian-inspired enclave of Caribé.

BRITTANY comptroller Cynthia Javarez, Crown Asia president Jerry Navarette and Brittany president Jing Serrano during the launch of Caribé at The Islands

CARIBÉ AT THE ISLANDS

Sprawling,single-story luxury

THERE ARE A FORTUNATE FEW who have earned the privilege to enjoy life as they wish. Each has carved out a respected niche in his chosen field of work, raised children who are themselves successful, and built a comfortable nest egg. For these fortunate few, property maverick Brittany Corp. has dedicated an exclusive enclave called Caribé, recently launched at The Islands in Dasmariñas, Cavite.

What distinguishes Caribé, complementing its distinct Caribbean-Floridian influences, is the structural design of homes that are specifically intended for its market-sprawling, single-story, luxury homes. Caribé is the first and most exclusive enclave to offer such homes—elegant and welcoming—in which residents can savor the best years of their lives. Their single-story structural designs are intended to maximize convenient movement and access to all parts of each home.

The best in island living

Caribé is the latest development to be launched at The Islands—a gated, master-planned, upscale 130-hectare community of colorful, island-themed enclaves inspired by the most desirable island destinations in the world. Each enclave provides a distinctive interpretation of the best in island living, Like all Brittany communities, The Islands offer a "lifescape," a total way of living that brings the enjoyment of life to a new level of quality for its privileged residents.

Inspired by exuberant, sunny Caribbean design and environmental elements that have been refined and rendered more sophisticated in posh south Florida communities, Caribé is an ideal setting in which to bask, full-time, in the rhythm of a leisurely life for those who have earned it. Residences are designed specifically for the master and mistress of the house, sprawling and single-story, with freedom and space expressed all over.

Open floor plan

The open floor plan of each residence allows one room to flow seamlessly into the next. The "great room" serves as the main function area for each Caribé residence. A wide veranda, located in the rear for privacy, serves as a vantage spot from which to appreciate the picturesque, tropical outdoors. The master's bedroom is a casually elegant suite that features, among other luxurious details, a walk-in closet. Ceiling fans emphasize the airy, breezy Caribbean tone.

Residents may choose among custom home sites (lots only) or home and lot packages with five residential models to choose from, ranging from a floor area of 135 square meters on a minimum lot area of 247 sq m, all the way to a floor area of 230 sq m on a minimum lot area of 440 sq m. Custom home sites are priced from P2.5 million to P5.8 million, while home and lot packages range from P7.2 million to P15.2 million.

Caribé residences are distinguished by colorful, textured exteriors with white moldings. Gabled façades are completed by doors and windows highlighted by shutters. Wooden floors contrast delightfully with "coffered" ceilings, which are elaborately styled and recessed.

Enclaves

The collection of enclaves at the Islands includes Ibiza, with custom home sites for Mediterranean-inspired estate residences. Another enclave, Island Park, features resort-inspired, custom home sites and home and lot packages. Both Ibiza and Island Park offerings are completely sold out. Montego, another enclave, boasts custom home sites and home and lot packages offering a vibrant, Caribbean-influenced lifestyle. Still another enclave at The Islands is Crown Asia's Amalfi, with Italian-inspired starter homes.

For future Caribé residents, the strategic location of The Islands is a major plus with its three main access points, via the community's access road to Molino-Paliparan Highway, or the Southwoods and Carmona Exits via SLEX. The Alabang commercial district is, thus, only a quick ride away. Manila can be reached conveniently through the Coastal Road. Leisure destinations in Tagaytay and Batangas are within easy reach.

Caribé is, pardon the cliché, a dream come true for the accomplished few who value freedom, privacy and space just the way they want it. The enclave fulfills a state of mind for savoring life at an unhurried pace, and it is an all-encompassing, well-deserved reward. Living a Caribé "lifescape" is not intended for the proverbial "every man." But if you've earned the privilege, Caribé is meant for you. For property previews, call Brittany at 850-2868 or 850-6986, or by logging on to www.brittany.com.ph.

TransCo
National Transmission Corporation

Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid

SUPPLY, DELIVERY, INSTALLATION AND COMMISSIONING OF REMOTE FIBER OPTIC CABLE MONITORING SYSTEM

Reference No.: PB060228-RM0026 / PR No. TTSD-06-000015687

1. The NATIONAL TRANSMISSION CORPORATION, Head Office Region (TRANSCO-HO) through the *2006 Corporate Budget approved by the TransCo Board* intends to apply the sum of *PhP 5,000,000.00* being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for the **Supply, Delivery, Installation and Commissioning of Remote Fiber Optic Cable Monitoring System** *Reference No.:* PB060228-RM0026/PR No. TTSD-06-000015687. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid opening.
2. The *TRANSCO-HO* now invites Bids from eligible Bidders for the Supply, Delivery, Installation and Commissioning of Remote Fiber Optic Cable Monitoring System. Delivery of the GOODS is required *in sixty (60) days*. The description of an eligible Bidder is contained in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB.
3. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act," and is restricted to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships, organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to Republic Act 5183 (R.A. 5183) and subject to Commonwealth Act 138 (C.A. 138). Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB. The bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine responsiveness of the bid to technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during the post-qualification procedure.
4. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders from the address below from March 20, 2006 to April 17, 2006 from 9:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M. and upon payment of a non refundable fee in the amount of *Php 1,000.00*. The method of payment will be *Cash*. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.
5. Site Inspection is required prior to the Pre-Bid Conference, for details please contact Mr. Lyndon S. Velasco at Telephone No. 981-4454.
6. The *TRANSCO-HO* will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all interested parties on *March 29, 2006 / 10:00 AM* at the *Admin Conference Room*.
7. Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered to the address below on or before *April 18, 2006 / 10:00 AM*. All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid Security in any of the following form or an equivalent amount in a freely convertible currency. Late Bids shall not be accepted.

Form of Security	Minimum Amount in % of Approved Budget for the Contract to be Bid
1. Cash, certified check, cashier's check, manager's check, bank draft or irrevocable letter of credit (1% of ABC)	PhP 50,000.00
2. Bank guarantee (1.5% of ABC)	PhP 75,000.00
3. Surety bond (2.5% of ABC)	PhP 125,000.00
4. Foreign government guarantee (100% of ABC)	PhP 5,000,000.00

8. Bid opening shall be on *April 18, 2006 / 10:00 AM* at the *Admin Conference Room same address below*. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend at the address below.
9. The *National Transmission Corporation* reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

National Transmission Corporation, Head Office Region
Mr. Armando N. Ochoa, BAC Chairman
MMD Office, G/F TransCo Main Bldg.
Power Center Complex, BIR Road, Diliman, Quezon City
Tel. No. (632) 9812206 / Fax No. (632) 9228432
Website: www.transco.ph

(Sgd.) ARMANDO N. OCHOA
Chairman, Bids & Awards Committee

(PDI – March 19 & 25, 2006)

Republic of the Philippines
SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM
East Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City
Tel. Nos. (632) 920-6401 • (632) 920-6446
E-mail: member_relations@sss.gov.ph • Web site http://www.sss.gov.ph

NOTICE

Please get in touch with the Members Assistance Center, Social Security System (SSS), East Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City or at any SSS office nearest your place of residence and file your death benefit claim within 90 days upon publication, if you are:

NAME OF BENEFICIARIES	LAST KNOWN ADDRESS	NAME OF SSS MEMBER	DATE OF DEMISE
1) Florita Apolo or Florida Edillor	Oaqui #4 Luna, La Union	Rodolfo Apolo SS#03-3038171-6	December 18, 2005
2) Genoveva Borja Manuel Apostol Maria Hernandez	Davao City	Pedro H. Apostol SS#09-0329603-4	August 20, 2005
3) Jovita	Unknown	Carlos Banao SS#03-7123270-1	July 13, 2005
4) Carina Bulatao Llanes	Parsolingan, Gerona, Tarlac	Artemio Llanes SS#33-3045537-7	September 8, 2005
5) Thelma, Jonathan, Jazzilyn & Jennifer Labrador	1410 Ibarra St., Sampaloc, Manila	Norberto Labrador SS#03-2746090-9	July 20, 2004
6) Rosemarie Gundrane	157 Imelda Ave., Tacloban City	Edgar Lorenzo SS#03-6780742-5	November 3, 2004
7) Julieta Lorenzo	67 M.H. Del Pilar, Tugatog, Malabon, Rizal	Romeo C. Lorenzo SS#03-1383759-1	August 13, 2005
8) Angelyn C. Mangahas	773 Kagandahan St., Tondo, Metro Manila	Apolinario Mangahas SS#03-2167654-0	July 19, 2005
9) Ella, Kaye & Rhoda Maluran	101 Botanical Garden Amorsolo, Legaspi Vill., Makati City	Roberto Maluran SS#03-2323712-3	February 26, 2003
10) Marieta C. Moquele	Kalilangan, Bukidnon	Archebaldo L. Moquete SS#08-0183607-5	March 1, 2005
11) Marco Ocenar	Purok 3, Mercedes, Catbalogan, Samar	Evelyn Perpetua T. Ocenar SS#06-2182459-7	December 24, 2004
12) Aquilina Tuyan Olaer	Unknown	Heracles Olaer SS#03-1419238-7	October 11, 2005
13) Rita/Florita Revelo	Sirawai, Zamboanga del Norte	Francisco T. Revelo SS#08-0421001-2	August 25, 2005
14) Carolyn C. Rivera	Unknown	Bernardo Rivera SS#03-9463522-0	February 22, 2005
15) Francisca	Unknown	Romeo Salazar SS#03-3496884-7	September 26, 2005
16) Resolita Solis	Salaman/ Tibpuan Lebak, Sultan Kudarat	Romulo F. Solis SS#09-0320661-3	January 4, 2006
17) Marcela F. Sayo	2077 Modesto St., Malate, Manila	Hermenegildo Talusig SS#03-0214159-9	May 4, 2002
18) Epifanio Peña Valdueza, Sr.	Hilongos, Leyte	Prudencia R. Valdueza SS#03-1105200-6	July 23, 2004
19) Annie Mendoza	Unknown	Ariel Maala Vidal SS#04-3412229-5	July 15, 2004

– Nothing Follows –

(PDI – March 25, 2006)

Republic of the Philippines
Province of Sorsogon
Municipality of Donsol

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Government of the Philippines through the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR) has received a loan from the Asian Development Bank (ADB) toward the cost of Agrarian Reform Communities Project (ARCP). It is intended that part of the proceeds of this loan will be applied to eligible payments under the contracts of Rural Infrastructure Component for which this Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid is issued.

The Local Government of Donsol, Sorsogon through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites contractors registered with and classified by the Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB) as Small "B" or higher for similar contract to apply for eligibility and if found eligible, to bid for the hereunder contract:

Name of Contract	Construction of San Antonio - Sitio Bantaron - Gogon Farm-to-Market Road
Location	Donsol, Sorsogon
Brief Description	5.25 kilometers road construction
Approved Budget Cost	Php 9,557,543.28
Contract Duration	144 Calendar Days

Prospective bidders should posses a valid PCAB License applicable to the contract, have completed a similar contract with a value of at least 50% of the ABC, and have key personnel and equipment (listed in the Eligibility Forms) available for the prosecution of the contract. The BAC will use non-discretionary pass/fail criteria in the Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids. The BAC will conduct post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference, Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulation (IRR).

The schedule of BAC activities is as follows:

BAC Activities	Schedule
1. Receipt from prospective bidders of Letters of Intent (LOI) including Application for Eligibility	March 28- April 3, 2006
2. Issuance of Eligibility Forms	March 28-April 3, 2006
3. Deadline for the Receipt of Eligibility Requirements	April 3, 2006
4. Notice of Results of Eligibility Check	April 5, 2006
5. Issuance of Bid Documents	April 6-12, 2006
6. Pre-bid Conference	April 8, 2006; 1:00 PM
7. Receipt and Opening of Bids	April 19, 2006; 2:00 PM

The BAC will issue to prospective bidders *Eligibility Forms* at BAC Secretariat, Municipal Hall *Donsol, Sorsogon* upon their submission of a LOI, and upon their payment of a non-refundable amount of **Three Thousand Pesos only (Php 3,000.00)** to the LGU of *Donsol's* Cashier. Prospective bidders shall submit the Eligibility Requirements to the BAC at the said address. They may also obtain the results of the Eligibility Check by the BAC at the same address.

All bids must be accompanied by a Bid Security in the following forms:

1. Cash/certified check/cashier's check/manager's check in the amount of one percent (1%) of ABC which is P95,575.44;
2. Surety Bond which is two and a half percent (2.5%) of ABC in the amount of P238,938.59 callable on demand and issued by the Government Service Insurance System (GSIS) or by a reputable surety or insurance company and to be posted in favor of LGU - *Donsol, Sorsogon*

The BAC will issue *Bidding Documents* only to bidders declared by the BAC to be eligible for the bidding upon payment of a non-refundable amount of **Five Thousand Pesos only (Php 5,000.00)** to the LGU *of Donsol's* Cashier.

The LGU of Donsol reserves the right to accept or reject any bid and to annul the bidding process and reject all bids at anytime prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

Approved by:

(Sgd.) ENGR. HELENE A. GARAY
BAC Chairman

AGRARIAN REFORM COMMUNITIES PROJECT
Province of Sorsogon
Municipality of Donsol

APPROVED BUDGET FOR THE CONTRACT

Name of Subproject	Construction of San Antonio - Sitio Bantoron - Gogon Farm to Market Road
Length/Units	5.25 Meters
Contract Duration	144 W.D.

Item No.	Item Description	QUANTITY	UNIT	ESTIMATED COST
	GENERAL	1.00	LS	163,196.00
	Item 100	31,515.60	SQ.M.	199,784.00
	Item 102	19,858.70	cu.m.	1,661,744.00
	Item 103	754.67	cu.m.	105,680.00
	Item 104	7,927.00	cu.m.	1,365,866.00
	Item 105	31,515.60	SQ.M.	340,680.00
	Item 200	5,851.65	cu.m.	3,257,692.80
	Item 405	55.08	cu.m.	284,336.00
	Item 407	3,963.80	KG	187,320.60
	Item 500	21.00	l.m.	61,809.00
	Item 500	91.00	l.m.	215,911.00
	Item 504		cu.m.	
	Item 505	59.44	cu.m.	120,620.00
TOTAL ESTIMATED DIRECT COST				7,964,619.40
CONTRACTOR'S TAX - 10% (Direct Cost)				796,461.94
CONTRACTOR'S PROFIT - [10% (Direct Cost)]				796,461.94
MATERIALS TESTING				
TOTAL APPROVED BUDGET FOR THE CONTRACT				9,557,543.28
Loan Proceed		DAR/GOP		LGU
8,605,585.34		796,461.94		155,496.00

(PDI - March 18 & 25, 2006)

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Int'l convention recognizes RP construction firms

SEVERAL PHILIPPINE COMPANIES IN THE building and construction industry were recognized by the International Federation of Asian and Western Pacific Constructors Association (IFAWPCA) during its 50th anniversary celebration, which coincided with the federation's 35th convention on March 15-18.

Established in Manila in 1956, Ifawpca is composed of leading associations from the Asia and Western Pacific regions, each representing construction companies from Australia, Bangladesh, Taiwan, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Nepal, New Zealand, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand and the Philippines.

Awards

Each year IFAWPCA recognizes companies and/or individuals who have shown admirable work and exemplary performance through its prestigious awards: Builders Award, the Choi Fieldman Award, the Atsumi Award and the Yeoh Tiong Lay IFAWPCA Award of Excellence.

The IFAWPCA Builders' Award is given to companies who have shown outstanding accomplishments in civil engineering construction and building construction. The Yeoh Tiong Lay Award of Excellence is given to those who have been relentless in their efforts in promoting the interests of the international construction industry in the global arena, while the Atsumi Award is conferred to an individual who has displayed excellence in promoting the interest of the construction industry.

Named after past Ifawpca president Choi Chong-Whan (and donor of the award), the Choi Construction Fieldman Award gives due recognition to individuals who play a key role in construction activities (project managers, superintendent, general foreman).

Recipients of the said awards are Oscar S. Gonzales of EEI Corp.—Choi Fieldman Award; David M. Consunji of A.M. Consunji Inc.—Atsumi Award; EEI Corp.—Gold, Builders Award, Building Category; Datem Inc.—Silver, Builders Award, Building Category; J.V. Angeles Construction Corp.—Gold, Civil Engineering Category; C.M. Pancho Construction—Silver, Civil Engineering Category; Felipe F. Cruz, F.F. Cruz & Co.—Yeoh Tiong Lay Award of Excellence.

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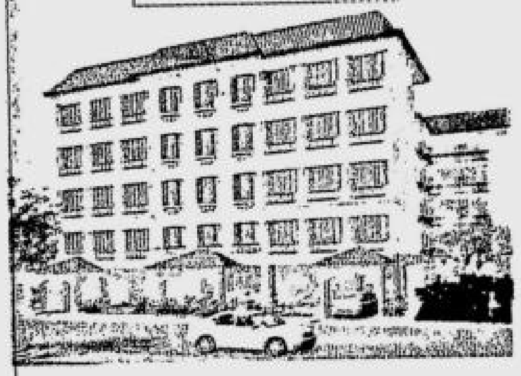

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SHOWN during the building inspections, from left, are Design Coordinates construction project manager Romy Puyo and Tony Gragasin, GF & Partners architect Ted Narcisio, Ayala Land AVP Ruel Bautista, Ayala Land Premier-Construction Management Group's Allan Yacat and Ayala Land Technical Planning's Mita Montinola.

Laguna Tower marks another milestone

AYALA LAND PREMIER RECENTLY held a topping-off ceremony for the Laguna Tower, the first of The Residences at Greenbelt's (TRAG) three condominium buildings. The event was attended by Ayala Land executives and various project team heads, who acknowledged the contributions of the partners involved in this much-anticipated endeavor.

The brief ceremony marked the beginning of a new phase in the tower's construction, a special occasion following last December's achievement of the "2 Million Safe Man Hours Award," given by its general contractor EEI Corp.

Event's significance

Said ALP project development manager Catleya Moya on the event's significance: "For TRAG, it means the superstructure's already completed and now we go into finishing the building. The next milestone will be the completion."

According to her, this marks the start of the finishing stage of the first tower. "It brings us closer to delivering it to the buyers, and for them to actually experience what the TRAG lifestyle is all about. It's very unique because of its location, as it is the only residential condo that's integrated with the Greenbelt Lifestyle Center," she said.

Moya added that very few units remain available for the Laguna Tower. "People trust Ayala Land; people really believe that it can deliver what it promised. We've reached our 90 percent level months ago. What everyone can expect is the quality that Ayala Land Premier is known for, and the timeliness of delivery."

Ayala Land Premier project director Mike Milaor explained that this is the second important milestone of TRAG after its groundbreaking.

Said Milaor: "This means the project team will now concentrate on the water tightness of the building to ensure that there are no leaks, as well as the interior finishing works, which is the most critical part. We have less than two years to finish the project. The punchlisting and rectification works will run through various stages. First is the punchlisting that will be done by the quality control group EEI Corp., the main contractor. After the first stage, the units will be inspected and punchlisted by our project managers, and then by Ayala Land Premier's marketing and customer relations group, before handing them over to the buyers by the first quarter of 2008.

Ayala Land Premier AVP Ruel Bautista is pleased that the event is a testament to TRAG's speedy yet safe construction practices. "In every project, topping off is very significant because it means that we are halfway completed, and because the structural works account for approximately 50 percent the total completion accomplishment," he said.

The Residences at Greenbelt offer numerous work, entertainment, dining and leisure conveniences right at your doorstep. It is the only residential condominium directly linked to the Greenbelt mall and the Makati Central Business District. World-class amenities and tireless service from the country's leading property developer inspire a whole new lifestyle for denizens of the energetic city.

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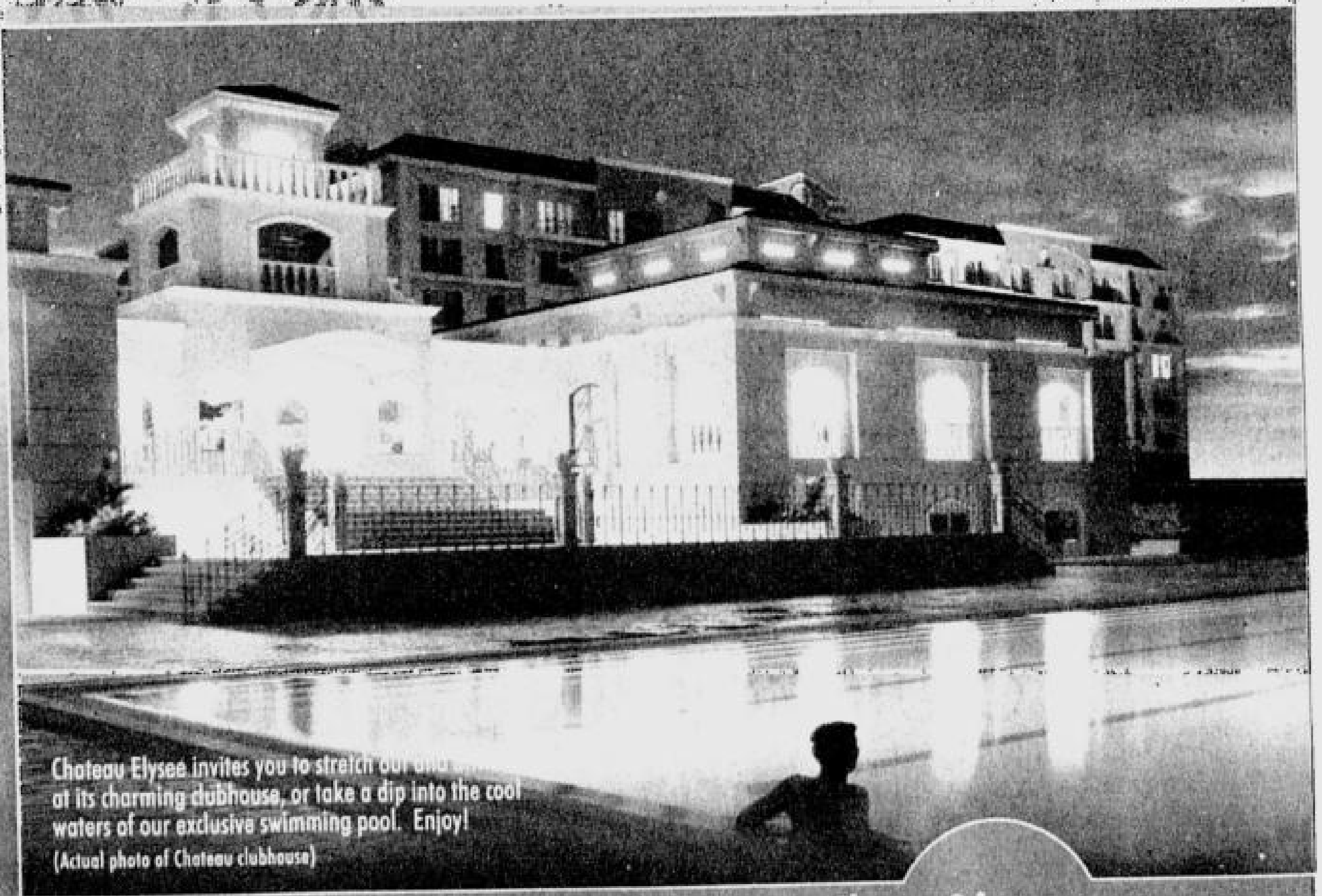

Chateau Elysee invites you to stretch out and [illegible] at its charming clubhouse, or take a dip into the cool waters of our exclusive swimming pool. Enjoy!
(Actual photo of Chateau clubhouse)

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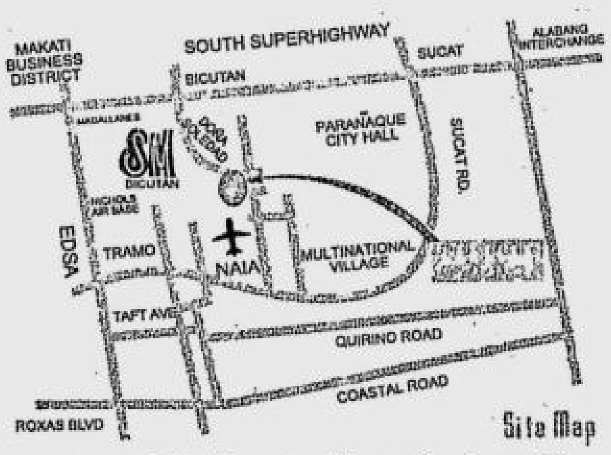

Doña Soledad Extension, Bicutan, Parañaque City

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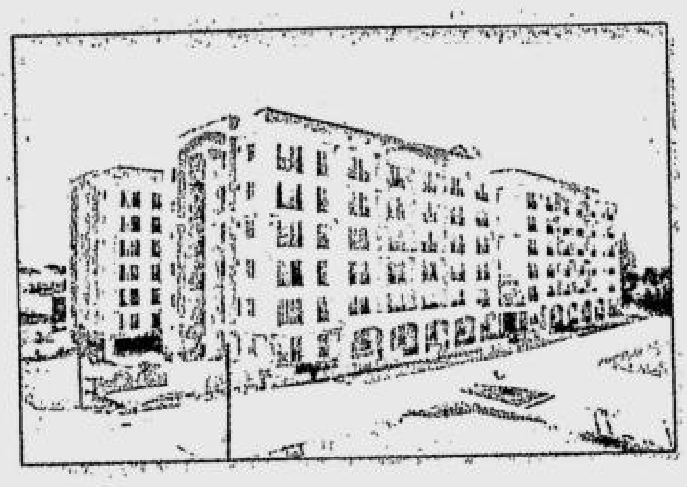

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SATURDAY, MARCH 25, 2006

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

C1

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Editor **Pam Pastor**
Creative Director **Tim Yap**

Super! Countdown

6 days 'til Tiesto vs Hed Kandi

Super

style . urban living . pop culture . entertainment . recreation

summer Assault

Super! exclusive
One-on-one with
Natalie Portman
page F1

Another Super! exclusive
G. Tongi interviews
Take the lead's page D1
Dante Basco

Catch this special
Summer
Musical Caravan
page D4

Fashion tips from
Pepe page C4
Diokno

Produced by TIM YAP
Photography : JENNA GENIO
Sittings Editor: DAVID MILAN
Make-up: JIGS MAYUGA for Shu Uemura
Shot on location: CLUB MWAH
Cover stars: KYLA, ERIK SANTOS, KIM FLORES, K AND THE BOXERS and FRENCHIE DY

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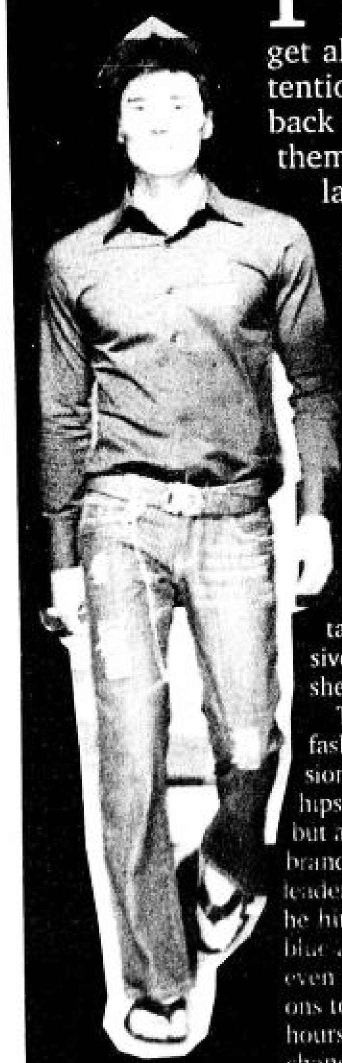
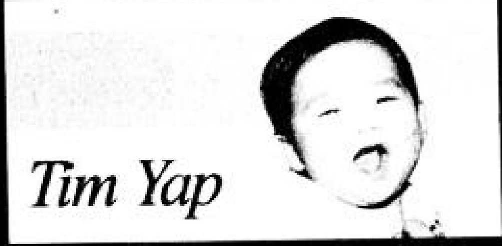




Tim Yap

FOR FOLDED AND HUNG'S latest summer inspiration, they went to the barracks to get all the men with the slight intention of taking them to Brokeback Mountain, but instead took them on a cruise around Staten Island to party at the Hamptons.

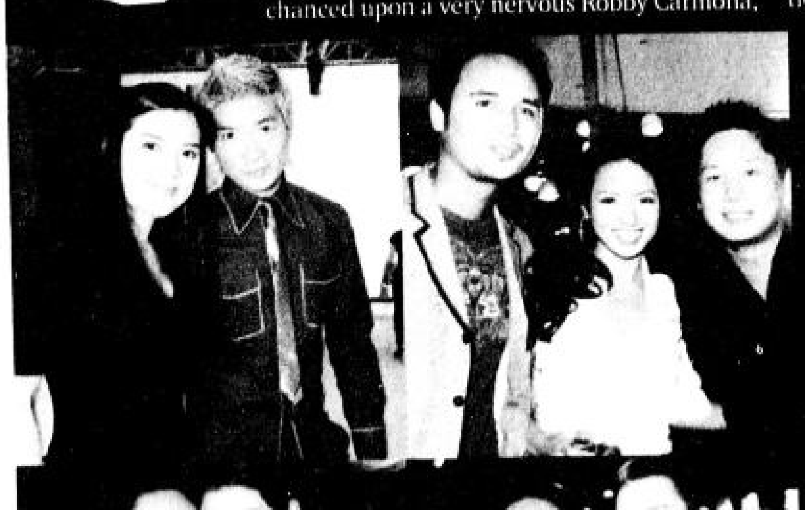
Monday night and the Ayala Museum was packed with industry A listers-supporters and followers of the F&H brand as they eagerly awaited the season's newest and latest offerings from the brand that has been known for style, quality and comfort at prices tailor made for the Pinoy pocket.

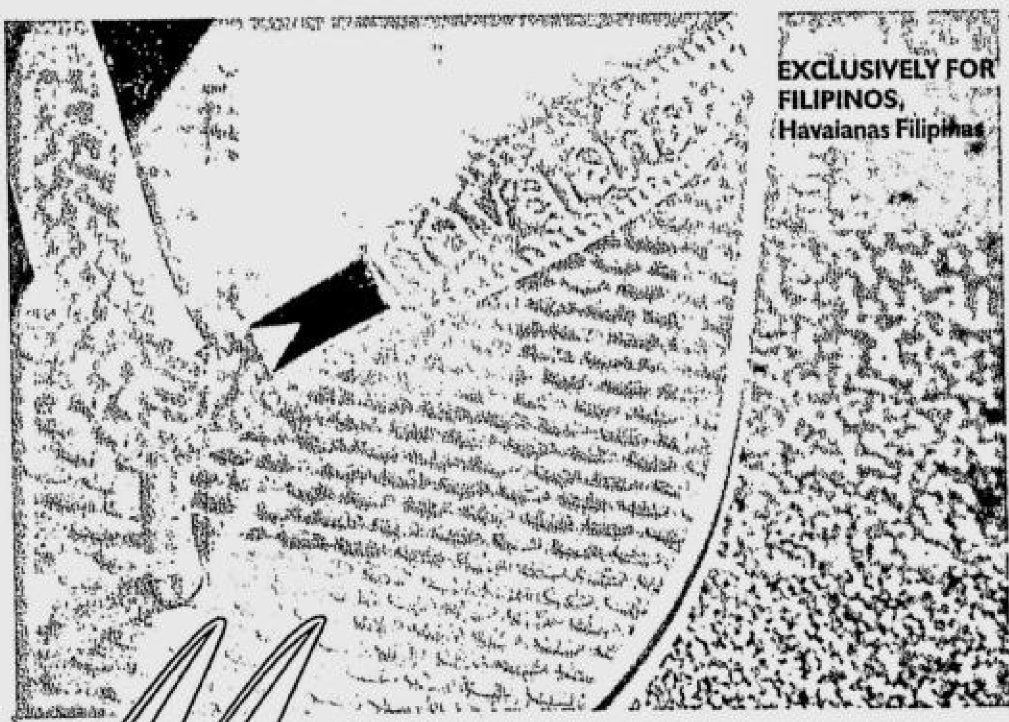
The unique thing about this brand is that it is able to take celebrity, and twist it in its own way to make it f*-ing hot, or hotter for the matter. Do you remember Claudine Barretto's star turn on the billboard row, spray tanned to perfection, looking so expensive that you'd forgotten the handbag ad she once did?

The wiz behind it all is Ronald Pineda, fashion's favorite entrepreneur whose vision catapulted F&H to the top spot among hipsters who are fully aware of global trends but are wise enough not to splurge on luxury brands. Alan Vanzon, the marketing genius leader of the team, showed me accessories that he himself designed. Chains in bright yellow, blue and orange with fighter jet pendants and even matchbox accessories are perfect cling-ons to the clothes, which I already previewed hours before the show started. Backstage, I chanced upon a very nervous Robby Carmona, who, despite doing a hundred shows a day, felt like "I'm doing my first show ever—really excited for this." And he had every reason to be.

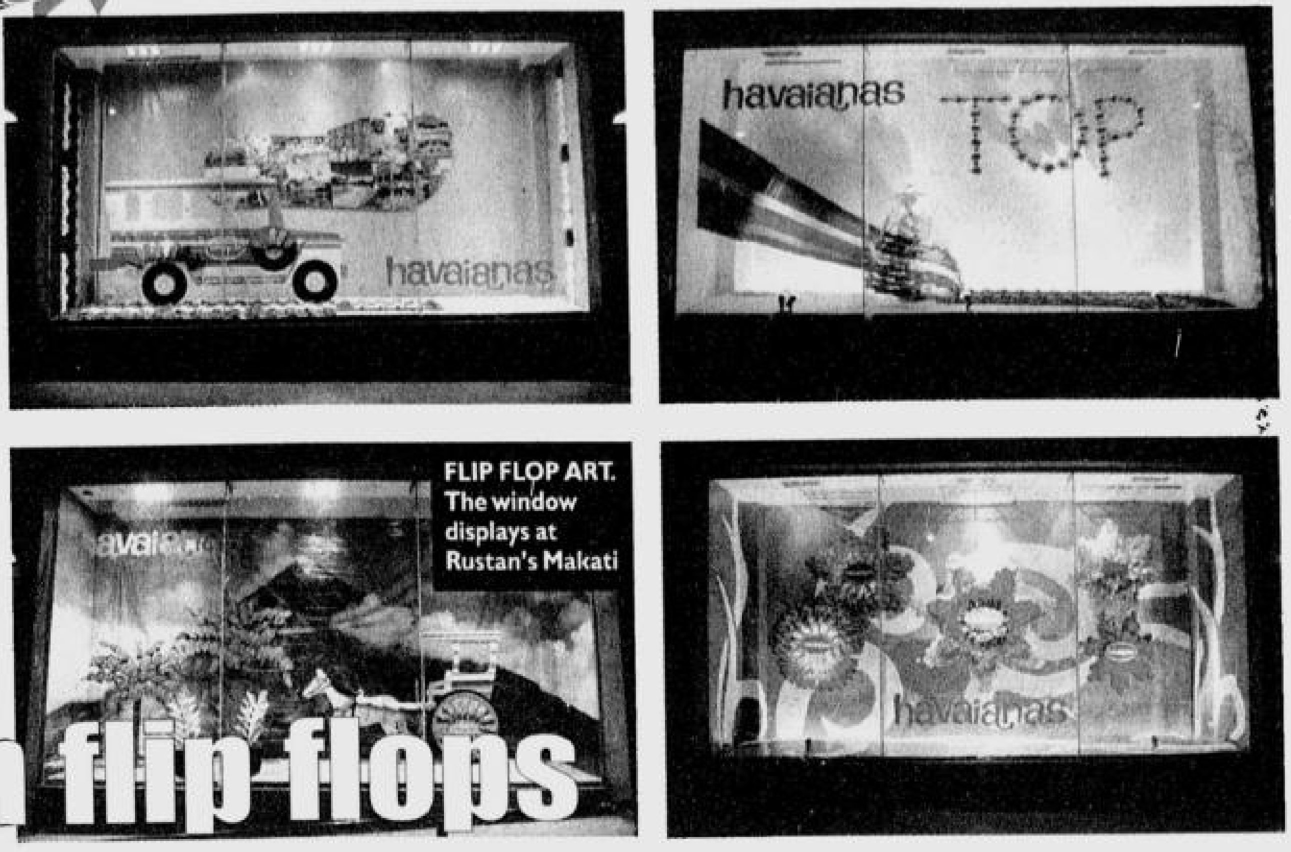
This time, without any theatrics, it was really about the collection. No over-the-top styling and gimmickry to hide the flaws. The clothes were snug yet very relaxed. Colors reflected tones of the Sahara, with an urban Indiana Jones on his way to The Fort for a night of dancing with other newly met cowboys. There was a certain poshness, a distinct sophistication to the clothes, a far cry from the beach-nik bohemian that pervaded seasons past. This collection reeked of sharp editing, careful attention to fabrication and detail. In doing so, F&H has become a purveyor of a new kind of minimalism that celebrates the male form—comfortable with his being fit, and playful enough to go illegally low.

Their newest endorser was unveiled at the show's end, after a barrage of Latino and Caucasian hunks—Polo Ravales came out in casual cocktail threads, and then did a double take as he came out as a Brokeback boy in an unbuttoned sleeveless top and Folded and Hung denim—revealing rippled abs and a pumped up chest that duplicated the image that you will now see on billboards everywhere. A collective applause for Polo and the F&H collection—the sandscape never looked this good.





EXCLUSIVELY FOR FILIPINOS, Havaianas Filipinas



FLIP FLOP ART. The window displays at Rustan's Makati

Make your own flip flops

Jumpstart the summer season with custom-made Havaianas that you can truly call your own

SO MANY FLIP FLOPS, SO LITTLE TIME. Since Havaianas was launched in the country a few years ago, the brand has gained a cult following. There are so many Filipino flip flop fans (say that 10 times fast) that the Philippines has become the second largest importer of Havaianas in Asia.

Terry S.A., the official and exclusive Philippine distributor of Havaianas, has given fans of the Brazilian flip flops a lot of surprises this year.

First, there was the release of the special Havaianas Filipinas which were designed exclusively for Filipinos. The white flip flops, which are adorned with the Philippine flag and decorated with stripes using our country's colors, are a statement of Pinoy pride. Because they are only available in the Philippines, Pinoys abroad have been asking their loved ones to buy pairs for them too.

Then there were the window displays. Five windows of Rustan's Department Store along Ayala Avenue were transformed into works of art made with flip flops. Two of the windows were Pinoy-themed, featuring the colorful jeepney and the *calesa*. The Havaianas windows were conceptualized in Brazil and implemented by Terry S.A., H.L. R Perez Inc. and IN.C Design Studio. Hundreds of slippers were used to create a traffic-stopping exhibit. Flip flop fans were even seen stopping in front of the windows to take photographs.

Regulars at the Havaianas section at Rustan's Makati received a surprise too. What used to be just a five square meter area on the U floor has now become a 30-square-meter-big Havaianas heaven with seven dioramas that highlight the brand's different designs. These dioramas will continue to change in the next few weeks.

There's even more excitement in store for Havaianas addicts—the chance to design their own flip flops. People have spent the past few weeks Googling for more details and logging onto their favorite online forum in hopes of getting more information. Super! has the 411.

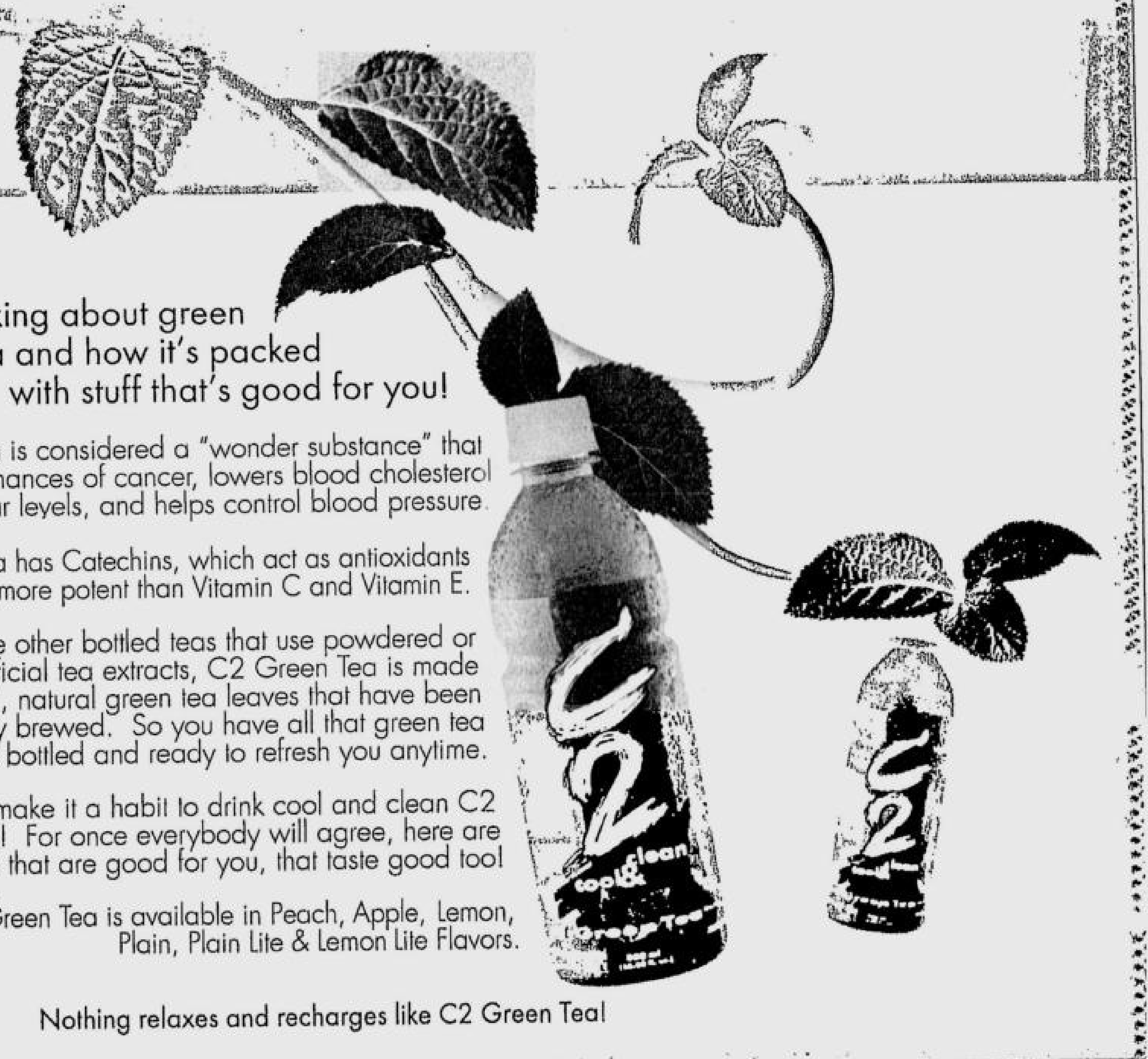
The Make Your Own Havaianas event will be held at Rockwell from March 31 to April 2. This event, which has already taken place in Paris, New York, Sydney and Tokyo, gives flip flop fanatics the chance to customize their own pairs by choosing from a wide range of Havaianas straps and soles which will then be assembled on the spot by Havaianas staff. Pairs may also be embellished with specially made pins.

Joining the event is easy. Purchase at least P995 worth of Havaianas on a single receipt from any of the event's 15 participating outlets. Only purchases made from March 20 and April 2, 2006 will be valid. The participating store will give you an Entry Coupon for the event. One coupon will allow you to make one pair of Havaianas for a fee. Head over to the North Court of the Rockwell Power Plant Mall from March 31 to April 2 and present your coupon along with the official receipt of your purchase. You can then make your pair. A pair without pins is P795 while a pair with pins is P895.

This sunny season, be creative, be unique, be yourself and Make Your Own Havaianas!

Participating establishments include All Flip-Flops (Glorietta 3), Aura Athletica (Rockwell Power Plant Mall), Blush Hour (Rockwell Power Plant Mall), Celio (Power Plant Mall, Greenbelt 3, Podium, Shangri-La Mall and Gateway Mall), Chocolate Clothing Company (Robinson's Galleria, Megamall, Shangri-La Mall, Eastwood Mall and Power Plant Mall), Gas (Podium and Greenbelt 3), Gymboree (Alabang),

Itsie Bitsie Boutique (Malate), Kidsports (Shangri-La Mall), Nail Spa (Gamboa Street, Legaspi Village Makati and Shangri-La Mall), Procreation (Shangri-La Mall), Rustan's Department Stores (Makati, Alabang Town Center, Gateway and Robinson's Place, Malate), Sepatu (Market! Market!), Sessions (Podium), Stoked (Power Plant Mall, Alabang Town Center and Bridgeway at Greenhills Shopping Center), Tonic (Astoria Plaza, Escriva Drive, Ortigas) and The Zone (7244 Malugay Street corner Buendia beside old Toyota Bel-Air).



Greens are good for you
(And we're not just talking veggies!)

We're talking about green tea and how it's packed with stuff that's good for you!

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Nothing relaxes and recharges like C2 Green Tea!

FASHION TIPS TO KEEP YOU ALIVE

Sedition-free fashion!

By Pepe Diokno

LAST WEEK SAW TRIUMPH FOR fashion—'cause finally, the Philippine National Police did something right. On March 18, policemen arrested former Cabinet Secretary Dinky Soliman and 20 of her companions. No, not because they were staging a rally, but because there were many of them at the same place, at the same time, *wearing the same outfit*.

I know. OMG! How can anyone stand in the same proximity with a person wearing the exact same get-up? You can't. That's why we have the Fashion Police. I mean, Philippine Police. So beware.

The arrests came after the government foiled a left-right conspiracy against fashion and a state of emergency was declared. Now, though the state of emergency is gone, our government says the threat still remains.

The Philippine government, and its Department of Justice Secretary Raul Gonzales, says it is monitoring shops, streets and even the pages of Super for violations against fashion.

See, they say that the only way to let fashion prosper is to limit fashion. These are words of wisdom, people. Keep them in your heart.

For you whining people, who say that this is unconstitutional, whatever. The bright people in Executive say that according to our Constitution, we live in a state where people can't go out whenever they want, and say whatever they want. Therefore people shouldn't be able to wear whatever they want either.

In the great words of Raul Gonzales, "Ahh … Freedom, aahh … has, aahh … limits." There is no fallacy there.

Anyway, we are merely servants of the government and should therefore follow everything it says. (Whoever told you "government's for the people" is dumb.) So to help you limit your own freedom—I mean, fashion—here are Super Sedition-Free Fashion tips! You want to live, don't you? Follow 'em.

Tip #1. Never wear a shirt if you know someone else has it.

If you do get stuck in this predicament, either have the other person(s) killed, or "invited for questioning."

Now, other reports say that it wasn't that the crowd had identical shirts, but that the the prints on the shirts were seditious. But what is seditious material?

Tip#2: Everything is seditious material.

Think about it. Let's take, FCUK. It's a slur rearranged. It has the words UK. Gloria Arroyo has been compared to Margaret Thatcher, a former prime minister of the UK. FC Gloria. Bingo! Sedition.

Guess? That's a five letter word that starts with a G. What's another five letter word that starts with a G? Garci! There you have it—sedition.

Therefore, you can only wear unprinted shirts with solid colors. What are acceptable colors?

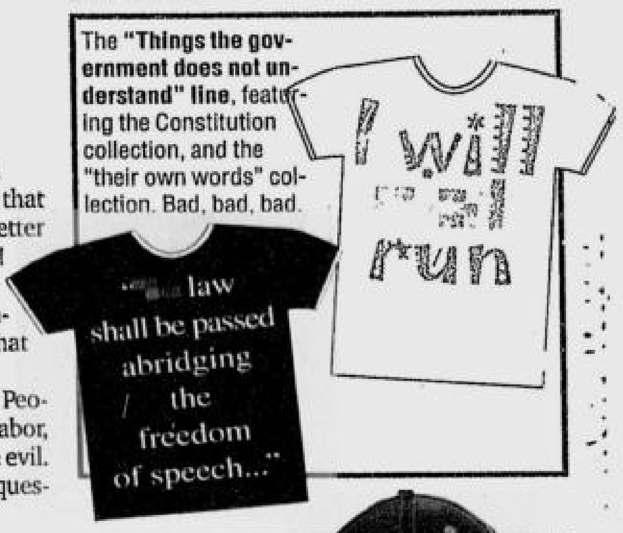
Black and white are evil. Yellow is People Power, and that's a no-no. Red is labor, and is therefore leftist, and therefore evil. Green is La Salle, so that's out of the question.

Tip #3. Fuchsia is the only acceptable color

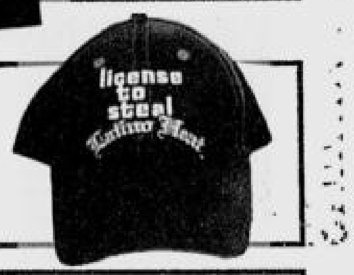
Oh no, you know what this means. You're going to have to go out and buy a new wardrobe! I have that covered too. Here are shopping Do's and Don'ts: Clothing lines and collections to check out, and those to avoid.

Avoid:

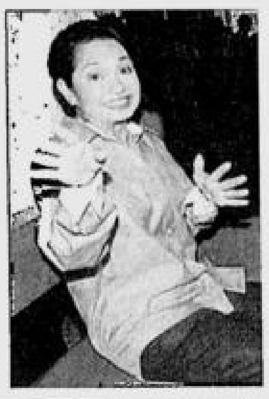
The **"Things the government does not understand" line**, featuring the Constitution collection, and the "their own words" collection. Bad, bad, bad.



WWE Eddie Guerrero caps.



This outfit on Gloria Macpagal Arroyo:



It's just bad.

OK, just to be safe, **avoid anything that isn't from the government.**

Shop at:

The Department of Justice has come out with some lines that may interest you:

One is the, **"Justice is Blind" line.** (We're told there was a slight problem with printing though. It's now the "Justice is semi-blind" line.)

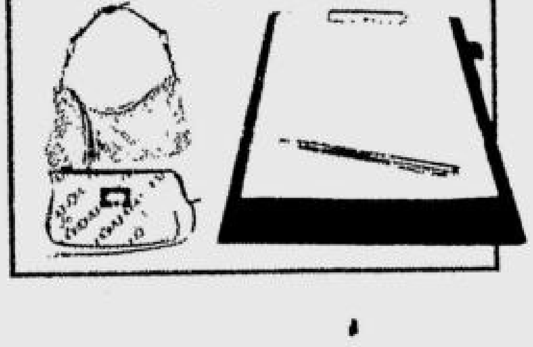
Two is the, **"Meaningful things Raul Gonzales has said" line.** (Because of budget constraints the shirts are blank.)

Three is the **"I am Sorry" line.** (Disclaimer: There was a miscommunication, and 200 of the shirts read, "I am guilty.")

Imelda Marcos, in her bid to reclaim her position as Governor of Metro Manila, has released these too-cute **I HEART GMA shirts.** (GMA, meaning the Greater Manila Area. But we don't have to mention that, do we?)

The beneficiaries of the administration's Fertilizer Fund have set up an online shop at fertilizersh*t.com*—wait, it's fertilizer-shirts.com* (my spelling's screwed today.) They sell shirts that read, "Gloria Forever!" and **a whole collection dedicated to the only farmer that benefited from the Fund.**

The governors of the Philippines are giving away **free government-approved Louis Vuitton!** And all you have to do is sign for it. (They will use your signature for a whole page paid advertisement in a newspaper. But that's a small price to pay for LV!)



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SUPER! EXCLUSIVE

Dante Basco takes the lead

He hasn't set foot in the country yet but Dante Basco is proud to be Pinoy

By Giselle Tongi
Super! Contributor

I FIRST MET DANTE BASCO AT a film festival series at the Arc Light on Sunset Boulevard a couple of years ago when I first moved to Los Angeles. The "infamous" Winston Emano, who is consistently getting mainstream Hollywood to take notice of Fil-Ams in show biz, introduced us in the lobby. Mr. Basco and I have been good friends ever since. I recently met up with him at the Grove in West Hollywood to catch up on what he has been up to. The last time I saw him was right before I was heading back to Manila, when he picked up my powder blue chaise lounge that he has now made a home for in his bedroom.

When I reached Starbucks, he was already waiting for me. So I set up my portable tape recorder and dug deep to let you all in on his roots, inspirations and plans for the future.

Pinoy roots

Dante was born and raised in Pittsburgh, California, a town just outside of San Francisco. He made an attempt to tell me where his parents were originally from in the Philippines, asking me to correct him if his accent is wrong. He got it right, with a slight American twang—Zambales and Pangasinan. He has never had an opportunity to go to those places but he says he wants to visit soon. He told me how his grandfather, a World War II veteran, was very involved in the Filipino community. Images of Dante playing a young WWII veteran in a Black Eyed Peas video come to mind. He and his three brothers, Derek, Darion and Dion all started breakdancing early and that's how they broke into the entertainment industry. All of them are in the industry—even his little sister Arianna. I asked him if talent runs in the blood and he said, "Of course, we're Filipino!"

His whole family packed up and moved to Los Angeles when Dante was only 10 years old. They moved around a bit. They used to live in Cerritos where, according to Dante, there is a huge Pinoy hiphop community emerging. He did most of his growing up in Paramount, California, a town that was predominantly Mexican and African-American. "Somehow now in America, the knowledge of being Filipino is becoming more and more recognized," he said.

Growing up, people thought he was Mexican or Latin. Some of them referred to him as "that Asian guy," not sure if he was Chinese or Korean. Today, Americans will surely know he is Filipino because he proudly declares it.

Dante knows he is fortunate to have been able to play a variety of roles.

Rufio—all grown up

I asked him about his most memorable role? "'Hook' was a great memory for me—to have been able to work with masters such as Stephen Spielberg, Dustin Hoffman, Julia Roberts and Robin Williams." He was 15 years old when he played Rufio, King of the Lost Boys. That was 15 years ago. He deems "Hook" as a part of his life—it was his breakout role, after all, one that Mr. Spielberg himself had given to Dante. Many people still call him "Rufio" up to this day.

Dante spoke about his biggest passions—and acting is one of them. He considers himself an actor first and foremost. For the past 20 years, Dante has trained religiously at the Gloria Gifford Conservatory of Acting. He even calls Ms Gifford his surrogate mom, his mentor. He said, "Acting is an art form and you must treat it with respect. It's so important to keep in shape in between jobs and be surrounded by actors so that you can keep your chops up."

Hollywood is very different from Manila in the sense that you are not always a

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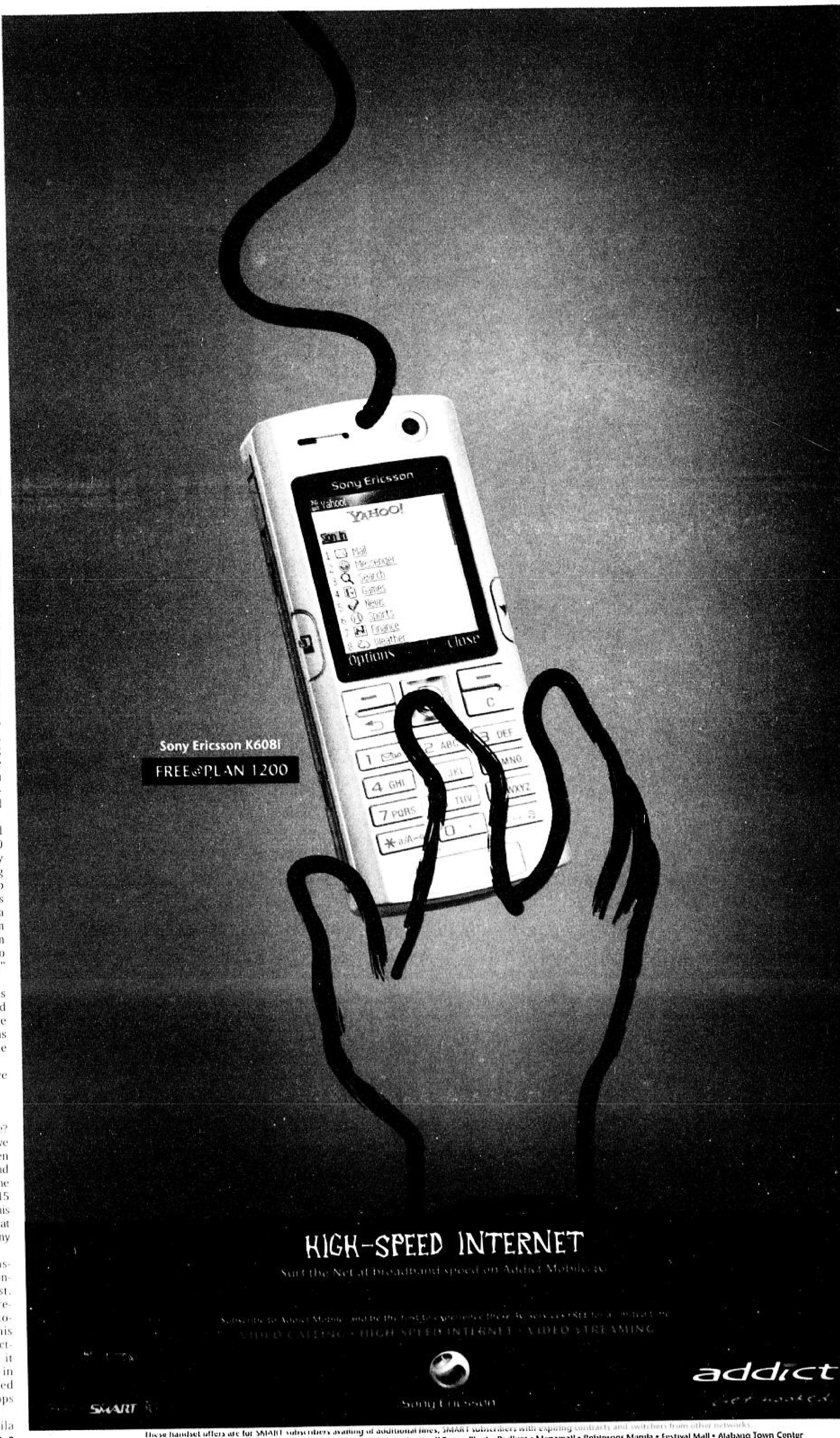

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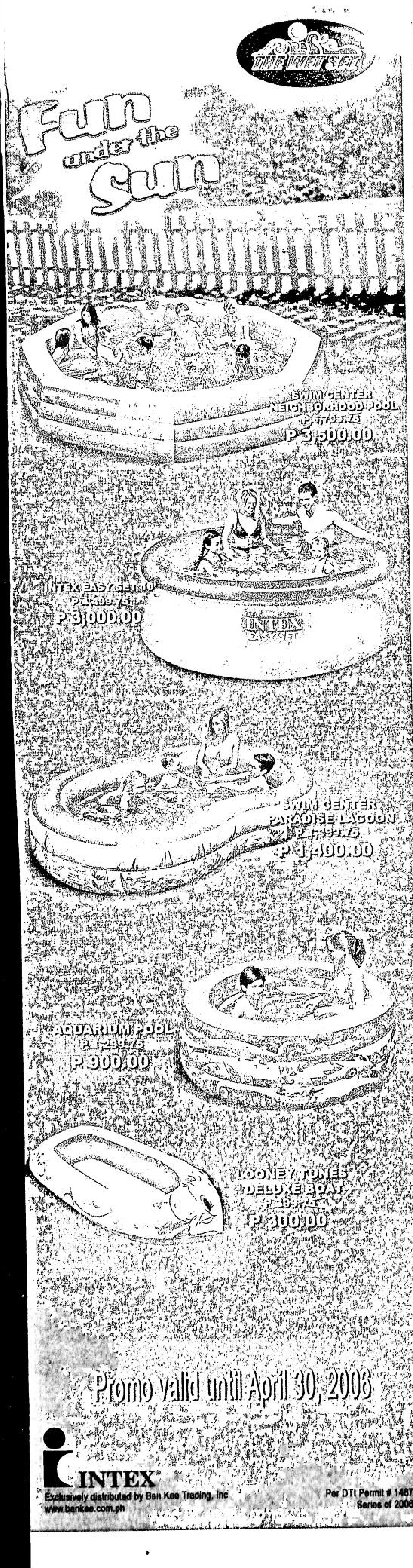
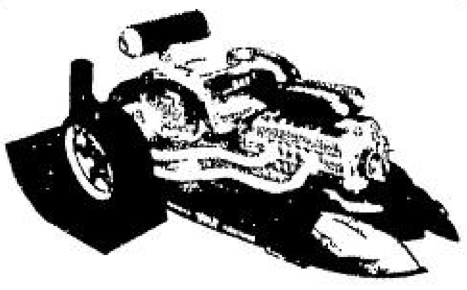




KIDDIE SUMMER ON WHEELS

Remember your childhood days when you dreamed of sitting behind the wheel of a top-down with your date and driving down the boulevard for some intimate moments? Or taking of on a Formula 1 race car to compete with the world's top drivers in a Grand Prix championship in Monte Carlo or Daytona? Or simply cruising with your chums in a late-model sedan in for one of these youthful adventures?

Today's generation of kids can new live and enjoy vicariously their driving fantasies with a range of new high-tech toys related to automobiles and motor sports. As the summer season beckons, these toys provide thrilling, enjoyable and pleasant but safe outdoor activities to kids of all ages.

Here are some of the hottest toys for your "summer-on-wheels" adventures:

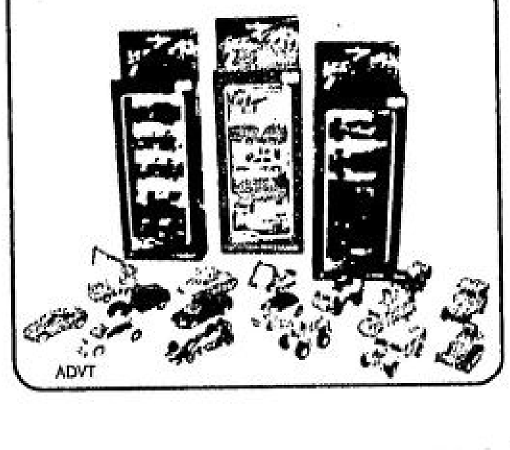
ROAD RATZ. Road Ratz is a line of remote-controlled vehicles for kids and adults that feature an easy operating system and a powerful suspension system. Among the latest remote-controlled models from RoadRatz are race cards Rally, Scaled Buggy, Formula One and the latest craze, Hummer.

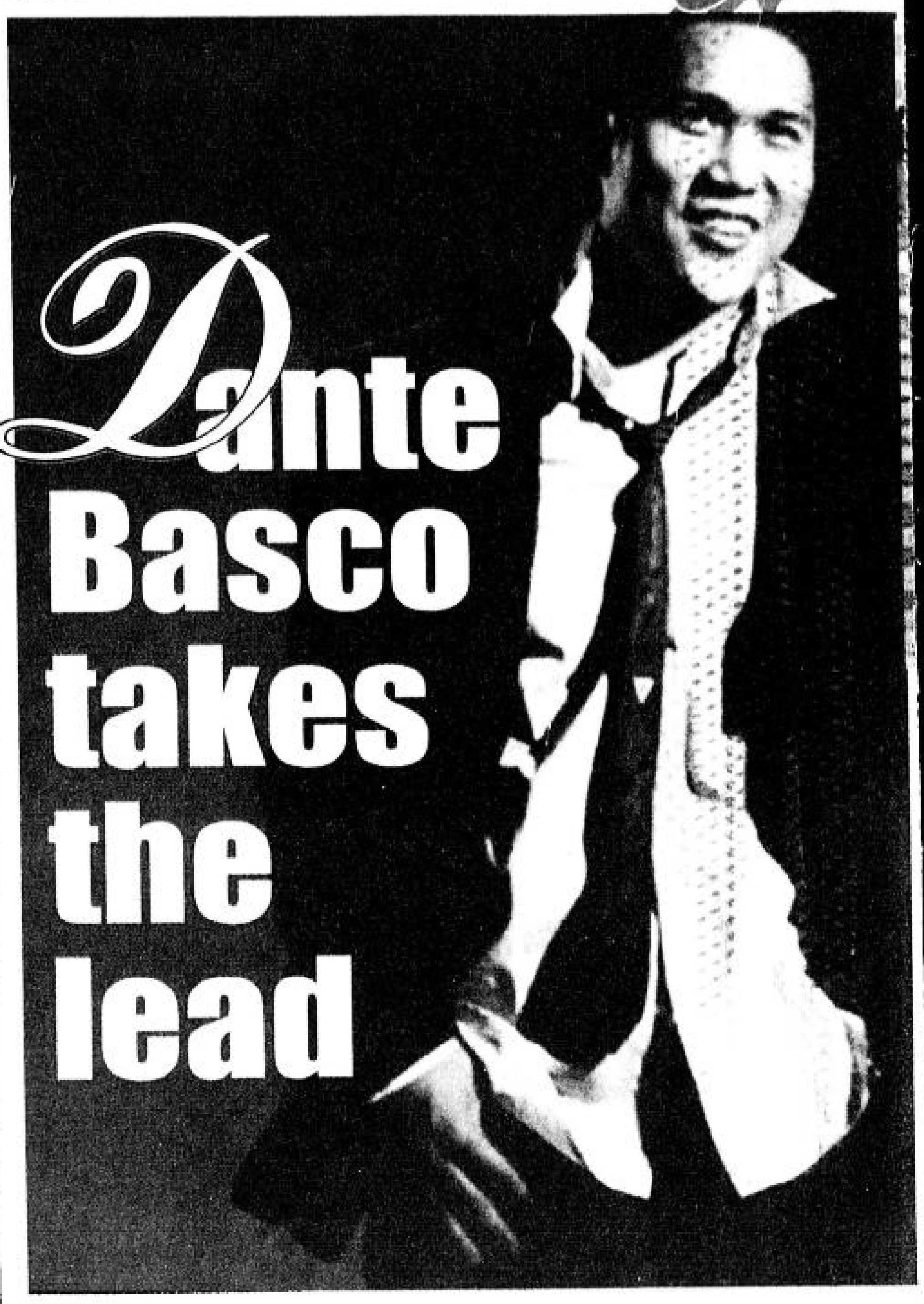
CORGI. Corgi's model vehicles, once simply considered as toys for boys are now gaining popularity among adults and are highly sought-after in the expanding collectibles market. Some models, in mint condition and complete with boxes and which originally sold for a modest sum, are now fetching hundreds of dollars. Today, majority of Corgi cars, trucks and buses are produced as Limited Edition versions, which made every Corgi car a must have model.

TOMICA. Die cast model fanatics are crazy about Tomica, one of the leading brands in die-cast car models --- from vintage cars to sport cars, from small to large and bulky versions, from delivery trucks to motorcycles. Tomica offers a range of die-cast cars and play sets that feature high loops and moving levers to control the car. Tomica cars are recognized for setting the trend with their highest level of die-cast and cool and awesome design and scale.

FLYWHEELS. High speed, high-performance Flywheels car boast an impressive array of die-cast cars accessories and play sets. Flywheels features 100 percent authentic licensed replicas in 1:10 scale of the top models of leading wheel tire and break manufacturers in the market. With a simple pull of a ripcord, Flywheels racers can zoom at over 300 scale miles per hour and jump to over 25 feet in the air.

Road Ratz, Corgi, Tomica and Flywheels toys are exclusively distributed by Ban Kee Trading, Inc. and are available at leading toy stores nationwide.





Dante Basco takes the lead

From page D1

working actor. Actors in this town are actually encouraged to learn and study the whole method behind the madness. Those 20 years of being in acting class has finally paid off in a big way for Dante.

Dante takes the lead

It has definitely been a long journey for Dante and he says that he has come full circle. He returns to his first love—dancing—in his latest film directed by Liz Freedlander. When he auditioned for the part of Miguel Ramos, he told the director that even if he did not get the part, he insisted that they get a dancer to play the role. He got the call that he had gotten the part while he was home on a rainy day. But he knew better than to get excited too fast. Negotiations still needed to be made and the deal wasn't sealed yet. He finally felt ecstacy as he got on a plane headed for Toronto for his three-month shooting schedule. He successfully showed the producers that no one could play a troubled teenage Puerto Rican from the rough streets of New York better than Dante Basco. He even tried to get them to change the characters ethnicity to Filipino but they would not budge.

Dante describes his character as "very flashy and chauvinistic, the leader of the pack." Even if it is an ensemble cast, he does have a prominent part in the film.

Asked about Antonio Banderas, Dante raved about the actor, "Antonio is a very sexy man. I'm a straight man but he definitely has something about him. He's really a star. He's a very loving, giving, warm and generous human being. He comes from the theater in Spain, he truly is an actor's actor. He's just a gem." Antonio plays the teacher that comes in and teaches the kids about life through ballroom dance.

First family

The Basco brothers are legitimately being hailed as the first Asian-American entertainment family. Dante's goal is to put out a TV

The King of th

Paolo R. Reyes
Janine Cuenca-Dario

IF DANCE MUSIC WAS A religion, then Dutch spinmeister, DJ Tiësto, would be a demi-god to its faithful followers.

The world's No. 1 DJ—according to the prestigious poll of the UK-based DJ Magazine (the equivalent of an Oscar in clublandia)—created headlines at the 2004 Olympic Games in Athens when he became the first DJ ever to perform at the opening ceremony of the planet's premier sporting event. The commissioned creation of his very own wax sculpture at the world-famous Madame Tussauds museum couldn't have been too shabby either.

On Friday, March 31 (mark those calendars!), the King of the Night cometh to Manila amid a blinding stream of strobe lights for a stamina-defying set of spine-tingling trance and hard house. Get ready to reach for the sky, suck in the infectious euphoria at the PICC Forum, and join the thunderous roar of revelers chanting "TI-ËS-TO ... TI-ËS-TO!"

Better start calling 897-2472 or 895-7471 before those oh-so elusive tickets get going, going, gone.

NBK's For the Love of House! @ Embassy Super Club, 10 p.m. tonight

Join NBK DJs Antz Santiago, Bombi Balquiedra, Jed Dario, Jon Naval, Manolet Dario, Marc Naval, Paolo Maralit and Raji Mata as they spin a heady dose of house tracks at the Main Room and VIP Room of Embassy Super Club [The Fort, Bonifacio Global City, Taguig, phone: 816-4199].

Other Super! 24/7 events:

Mar. 25, Saturday

NBK's For the Love of House at Embassy Club; Absinth 3rd Anniversary Party at Absinth; Tribute to the Lost Pinoy Bands of the '90s with Tension, Twisted Halo, Christmas Lights, Soapdish, Pedros Cannabis, and CopperPopThrill (CPT) at Saguijo; The Rat Pack at Araneta Coliseum; Cynthia Alexander at Conspiracy; 20something Saturdays at Mezze; Dance Deluxe w/ DJ Martin Pulgar at Embassy Super Club; Quench with DJs Chip dela Calzada & Mac Cunanan at Quisine; Freshly Squeezed at Citrus; Pump Saturdays at Jill's; DJ Bad boy Jeff at Temple; Soundsgood DJs at Embassy Cuisine; DJ Crash at Absinth; DJs Scratchmark at Bliss & Shorty at Prince of Jaipur; Bam del Valle at Government; Compusition Night at Mag:Net Café Katipunan Escape & Fairground at Virgin Café; Bobby Soul & Kuh Ledesma at Captain's Bar

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

This Pinoy Hollywood actor talks about his roots, his current projects and his hopes of representing the Philippines more

show, an album and a movie in the coming year. And why not? They have been around for 20 years. If the Wayan brothers can do it, why not them? But the question is: are the Americans ready for the Filipino wave? The Asian invasion?

There's stopping this actor, dancer and—yes, you guessed it—singer. Dante is part of the "Basco Brothers" (formerly known as The Fly Brown Dragons)—a rapping and singing group that he formed with his siblings. They are currently recording in the studio.

Dante has a lot of other plans. He is already slated to collaborate with Apl de Ap of the Black Eyed Peas who will be putting up Jeepney Records soon. He also has several scripts in development but initially wants to start shooting a film with his older brother Darion (who was also in the "Debut" with him) about them rediscovering their roots back in the Philippines. He does voice-overs for two cartoons. On the Nickelodeon cartoon, Avatar, he plays Prince Zuko, a character reminiscent of his role in "Hook." On the Disney Channel, he plays an Asian kid who turns into a dragon in "American Dragon."

The first and last time he was in the Philippines was only for a week when they were casting for the "Debut" years ago. He was way too excited to sleep but at least was able to go out and get a taste of the legendary nightlife. Right now, he's just waiting for a chance to go back to his parents' homeland. He wants his brothers to go with him so they can document their homecoming. They want to be home for at least a month so that they can create something and make it work for both markets.

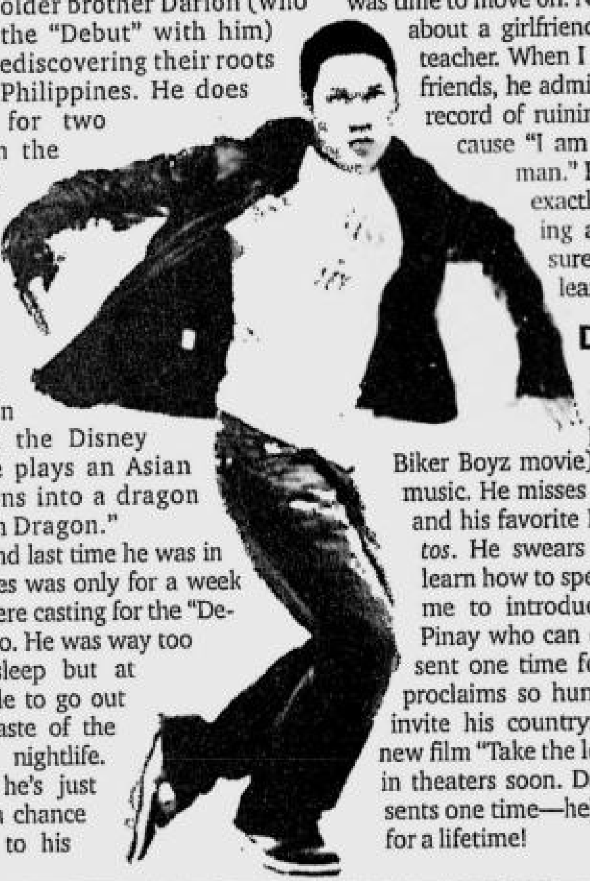
Off the record

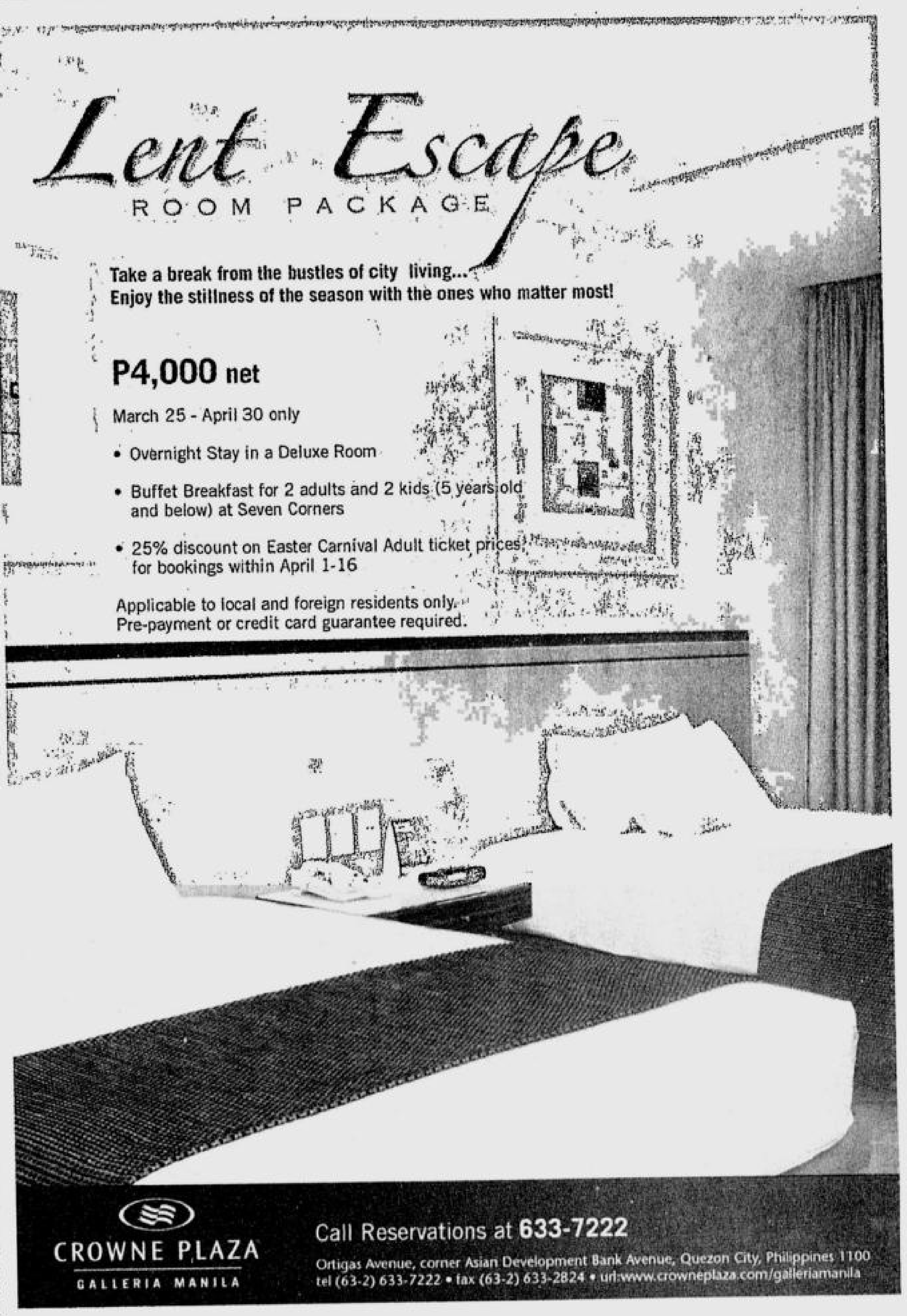
People wonder what the life of a movie star is like. Dante's typical day starts when one of his brothers starts blasting music in the Hollywood Hills house they all share. They usually all go out for breakfast unless Darion (who fancies himself a chef) takes over the kitchen.

He recently is going through some life-changing experiences and to commemorate the pain and struggle, he got a tattoo of a motorcycle on his left bicep. Like any relationship, it ended bittersweet but he says it was time to move on. No, he wasn't talking about a girlfriend, it was his acting teacher. When I ask him about girlfriends, he admits to having a track record of ruining relationships because "I am a man—a Filipino man." Enough said, I knew exactly what he was talking about. But he reassures me that he is learning!

Dante tidbits

To relax, he rides his motorcycle (he picked that up in the Biker Boyz movie), writes poetry and music. He misses his mother's *lumpia* and his favorite Filipino word is *bastos*. He swears he really wants to learn how to speak Tagalog and asks me to introduce him to a pretty Pinay who can coach him. "I represent one time for the Filipinos," he proclaims so humbly when asked to invite his countrymen to support his new film "Take the lead" which will open in theaters soon. Dante not only represents one time—he'll makes us proud of for a lifetime!

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e Night Cometh

Mar. 26, Sunday

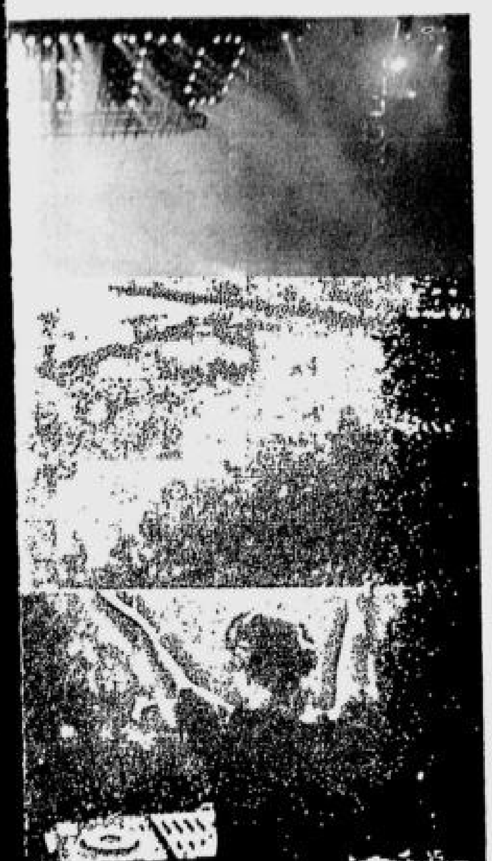
Repertory Philippines' 7 ng Umaga at REP's Globe Theater at Onstage, Greenbelt 1; Bloody Mary Sundays at Absinth; Acoustic Night at Phi Bar

Mar. 27, Monday

Ethan band at Temple; Legendary Mondays with DJ Patch at Absinth; Michaelangelo at Conspiracy; I Don't Like Mondays! With DJ Ro at Gweilos Makati; In-house Genre Music at 6 Underground; Epic band at Virgin Café; Follies de Mwah at Club Mwah; Eastwind Jazz Trio at Captain's Bar; Wine Buffet at The Lounge

Mar. 28, Tuesday

Death by Tampon at Mag:net Café Katipunan; Kickback Tuesdays at Manila DJ Club; Salsa Night at Mezze; Guarana at Café Havana Greenbelt; Acoustic Night at Temple; Ria Villena-Osorio at Conspiracy; Velvet Party with DJs JD & One Nyt Stand at Absinth; Mocha at Virgin Café; Sitar Nights at Bollywood; Spirit of '67 at Captain's Bar



Mar. 29, Wednesday

Analog, Agaw Agimat, The Dorques, and Cherry Cornflakes at Saguijo; Funksouljah at Manila DJ Club; DJs Karl Ty & Cao Ocampo at Embassy Cuisine; Willy Wanka's Music Factory with DJ Joffy Cruz at Gweilos Makati; DJ Patch at Absinth; Javadelic with Bo Razon at Mag:Net Café Katipunan; CouchLab DJs at Uva; Wicked Wednesdays at Temple; Acoustic Night at 6 Underground; Way Back Wednesdays at Bed; FreeVerse at Virgin Café; Noel Cabangon at Conspiracy; Weekend Wednesdays with Boyet Almazan at Strumm's

Mar. 30, Thursday

Electronica Manila Night at Saguijo; Fluxxe: Whatever Thursdays at Manila DJ Club; Digital Alternative Acoustic at Conspiracy; Silly People's Improv Theater (SPIT) at Mag:Net Café Katipunan; Barbie Almalbis at SM Sta. Mesa Cinema 1; Zodiac Thursdays at Citrus; Rock n' Rhythm at Absinth; Supahstar DJ Thursdaze at Bed; DJ Brit at Government; Ladies Night with DJ Badboy Jeff at Temple; Noel Cabangon at Conspiracy; Zyncxation at Virgin Café; FreeVerse at Suburbia

Mar. 31, Friday

Hed Kandi: Greatest Hits at World Trade Center; DJ Tiesto: Asian Tour 2006 at PICC Forum, Roxas Blvd.; Decadance with Boyet Almazan at Jill's; Celestial with DJ Benjo Marquez at Mezze; Urbandub, Severo, Monkeyspank, and Pinas at Mag:net Café Katipunan; Superfly Friday with Karl Ty at Citrus; MyHOUSE at M Café; Francis M with Hardware Syndrome Band, Sun Valley Crew, Chillitee's, Cambio, and Sandwich at Saguijo; Joey Ayala at Conspiracy; DJ Mark de Leon at Mati; Owens Sun at Embassy Club; Calypso DJs at Embassy Cuisine; DJ James McCranie at Absinth; Jive Fridays at Temple; The Jerks at 70s Bistro; DJs Scratchmark at Prince of Jaipur; Wiseguys & Freeway at Virgin Café; Barbie Almalbis at SM Southmall Cinema 3; Bobby Soul & Kuh Ledesma at Captain's Bar

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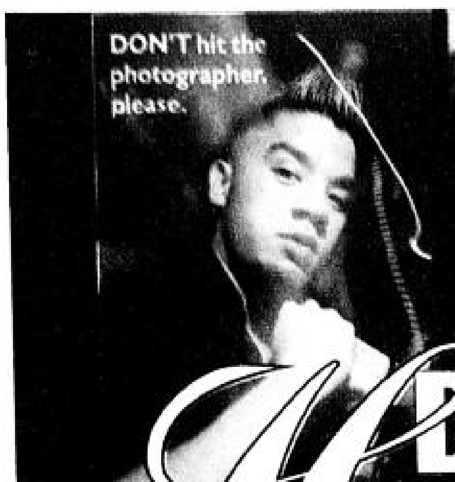
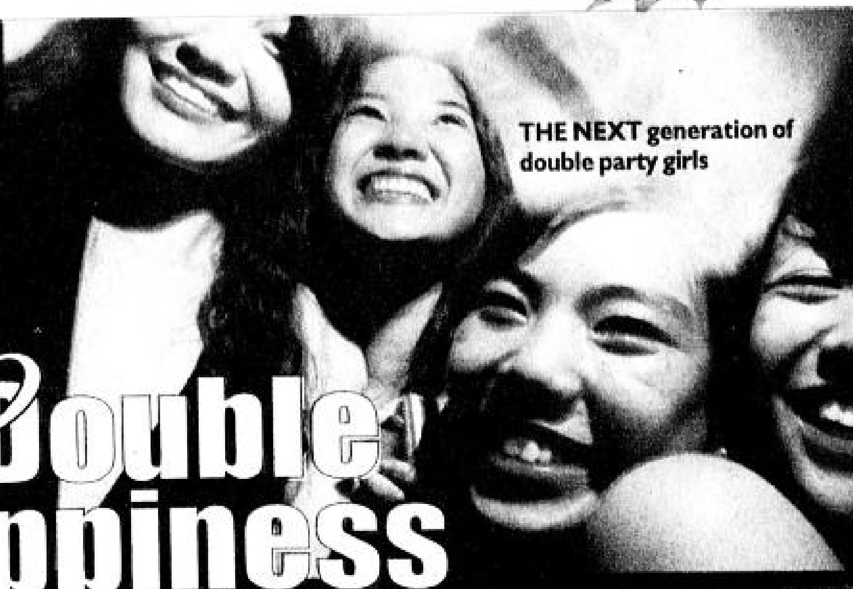


DON'T hit the photographer, please.



THE NEXT generation of double party girls

JENNI Epperson and Robby Carmona scream with delight when they found out about the second party

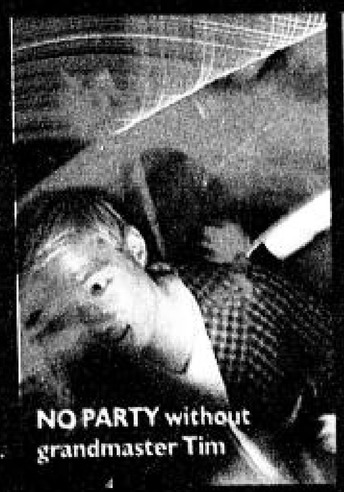
GOTTA GO. My drink starts glowing.

COOL blue beauty

I MUST have been rather high. She told me to come down again.

HE HE HE. hmmmm huh hu hu hu, he he...

SARAH Cruz celebrated her birthday as well.

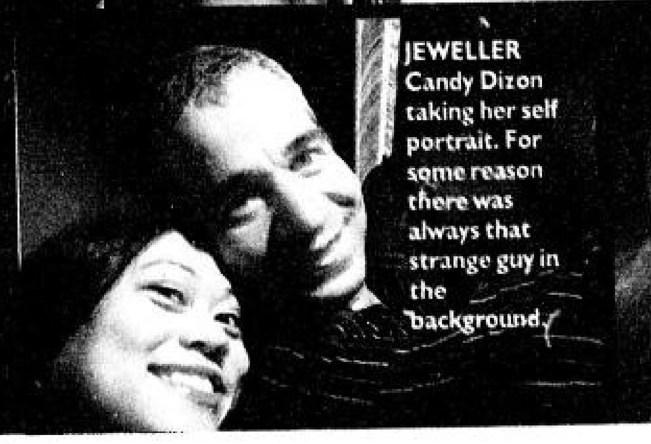


NO PARTY without grandmaster Tim

DON'T tempt me...

...well maybe a little...

OK, I'll put my pants back on.



JEWELLER Candy Dizon taking her self portrait. For some reason there was always that strange guy in the background.

FIRST I thought she came with hair curls...

caught by

andy MAUCHE

www.dont-touch-my.com

PUEY QUIÑONES. Double birthday kid Puey glows with double happiness.

WHY [illegible] when you can have two. Fres[illegible] fashion wonder boy Puey Quiñon[illegible] wanted to make sure that if you didn't get totally hammered at his birthday party at Embassy's VIP room, then you will get your last push at Mezze the next evening. For me it was a great excuse to stay drunk for two days and in that way avoiding to get hangover. I bought Puey some really nice pants and a shirt in Cubao for his birthday present. It's about time that guy is getting dressed properly. He was sooo happy. I think he actually had tears in his eyes.

I also saw **Normen and Astrud** Crisologo, designer Randy Ortiz, fashion editor Karla Alindahao, Bea Ledesma, F&H's Ronald Pineda.

Wines was sponsored by Rene Barbier. Thanks to Fro Oliva and Aaron Palileo

Bagong

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Exotica for your ears

Or, sound advice for the download-it-now generation

Age against the machine

Gino de la Paz

HOW DO YOU KNOW THE world is spinning properly on its axis? For music snobs and the similarly—maniacally—obsessed, it's when a once-scattershot assortment of beats finally comes together, jumps out of the speakers, and bitchslaps you, well, in a good way. At least that's how I define it.

As someone who consumes the sounds of the universe with long-lens intensity and wide-eyed interest, I can say there are only two kinds of music: Good and bad. I'd now like to introduce you discerning peeps—largely unaware of the melodies of my inner Cali-casual world—to enjoyable epiphanies you normally may not have chanced upon.

Quiet is the new loud

Sweden's answer to Nick Drake, twentysomething José González is already a lo-fi legend in Europe. A collection of indie bedroom songs, his much-admired debut, "Veneer," manages to summon eclectic influences like Elliott Smith, Joy Division and even Joao Gilberto while training the spotlight on his own sensitive vocals and gifted guitar strumming. Out of curiosity I downloaded "Hand On Your Heart," which turned out to be his barebones version of a Kylie Minogue classic. It seems America is warming up to his acoustic brilliance as well. His track "Crosses" has been featured on "The O.C.," sending teen bloggers and Sufjan Stevens fans into a mild auditory frenzy.

Speaking of hushed tones, American classical pianist and radio show host Christopher O'Riley has received both critical and popular acclaim for his piano transcriptions of songs by, get this, Radiohead. His latest set of reimaginings, "Hold Me To This: Christopher O'Riley Plays Radiohead," slipped through the Bach door as it were. Now classical music

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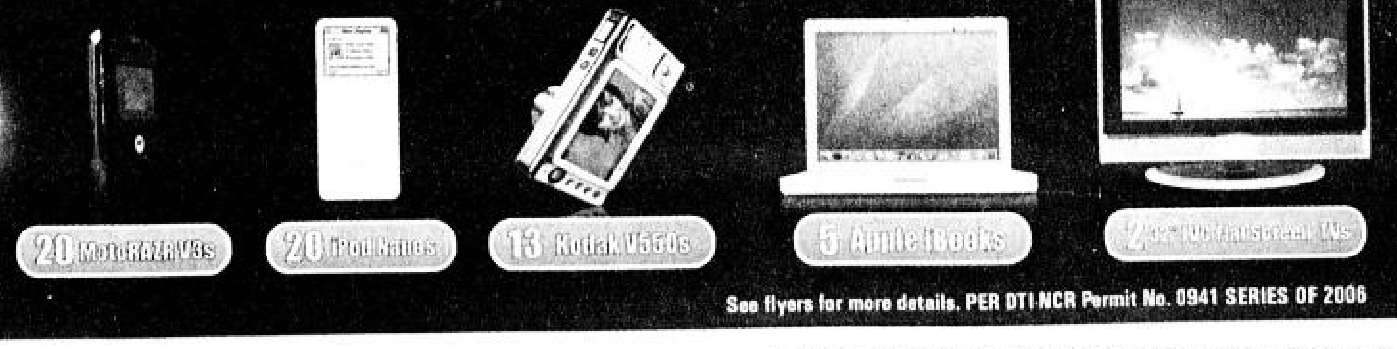

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By Pam Pastor

KYLA. FRENCHIE DY. K BROSAS and the Boxers. Kim Flores. Erik Santos. What do they have in common?

Not a lot. Well, maybe two things. They're Backroom artists and they're part of the Summer Musical Caravan that will take them around the country.

This project, which is the brainchild of Backroom Inc. and is directed by Bong Quintana, promises to be exciting, enthralling, funny and, according to them, fiery.

Kyla the R&B Princess, Frenchie the Big Champion, comedy musical act K and the Boxers, Kim the new singing sensation and Erik the Prince of Pop join forces to make a memorable journey.

The group will perform at the Pagcor Grand Theatre in Parañaque on March 31, the Ynarez Gymnasium in Antipolo City on April 28, in Pampanga on April 29 and in La Salle Bacolod on May 20.

Sexy comedienne Rufa Mae Quinto will appear as a special guest in Kyla's place at the Del Rio Splash Resort in Marbel City on May 12, at the South Cotabato Gymnasium and Cultural Center Marbel City on May 13.

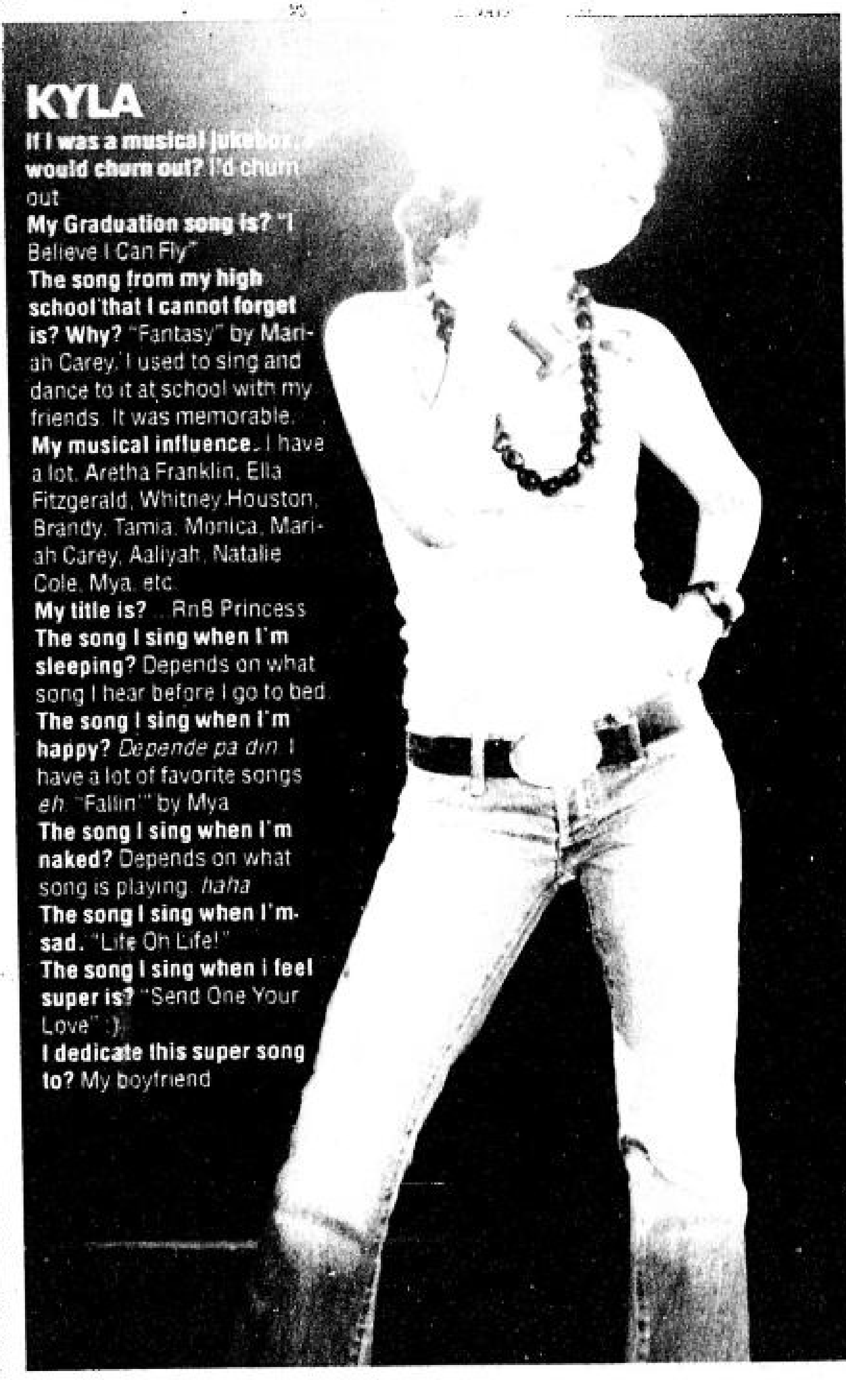
For more information, call Backroom at 4353808 and 9283121 or e-mail backroomtalents@pldtdsl.net.

Spectacular, spectacular . .

The Backroom Super

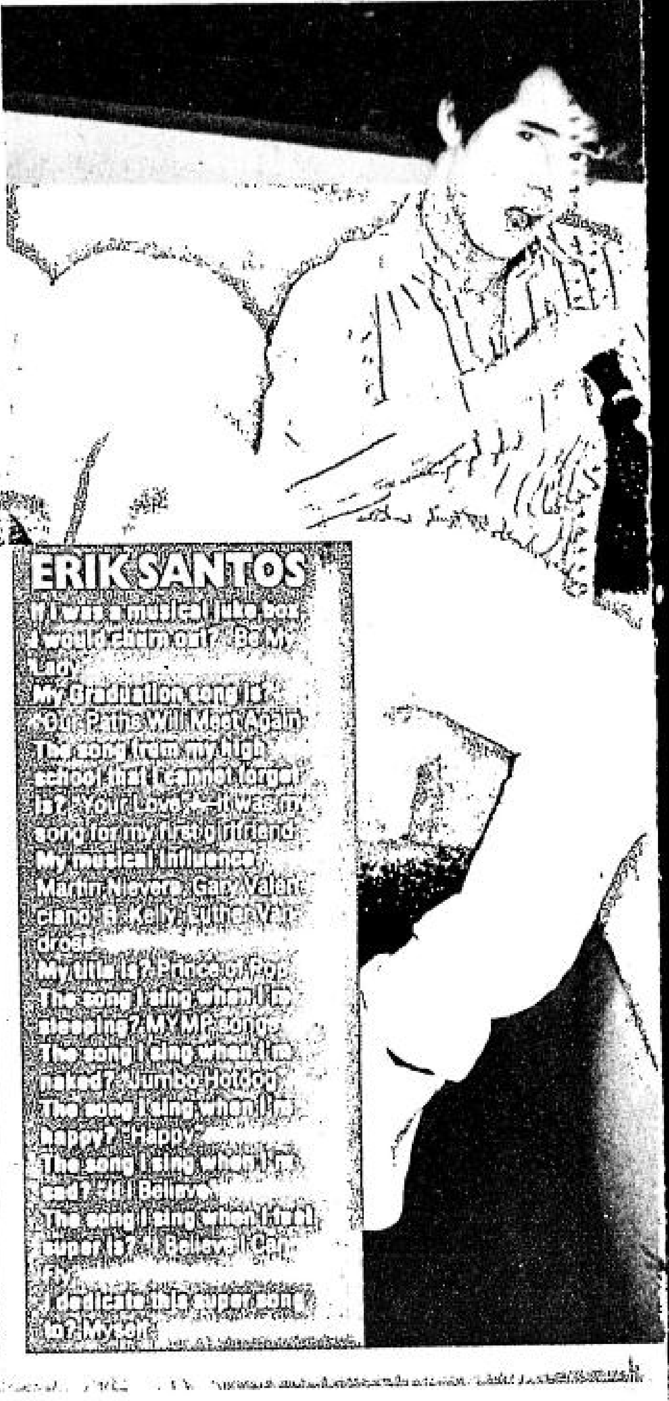
FRENCHIE DY

If I was a musical jukebox, I would churn out? "Luha"
My Graduation song is? "Farewell"
The song from my high school that I cannot forget is? "Katarungan" by Imelda Papin . . *hahahaha!! Nakakaloka kase kinanta ko sya nung kundiman* [illegible]
My musical influence: Aretha Franklin, Missy Elliott, [illegible], Regina Belle, Jennifer Holiday, Tina Turner, Madonna [illegible]
My title is? [illegible]
The song I sing when I'm naked? "Don't Cha" by Pussycat Dolls or "My Humps" [illegible]
The song I sing when I'm happy is? "Happy" [illegible]
The song I sing when I'm sad? "Can't Make You Love Me"
The song I sing when I feel super is? [illegible]
I dedicate this super song to? [illegible]



KYLA

If I was a musical jukebox, I would churn out? I'd churn out
My Graduation song is? "I Believe I Can Fly"
The song from my high school that I cannot forget is? Why? "Fantasy" by Mariah Carey. I used to sing and dance to it at school with my friends. It was memorable.
My musical influence. I have a lot. Aretha Franklin, Ella Fitzgerald, Whitney Houston, Brandy, Tamia, Monica, Mariah Carey, Aaliyah, Natalie Cole, Mya, etc.
My title is? .. RnB Princess
The song I sing when I'm sleeping? Depends on what song I hear before I go to bed.
The song I sing when I'm happy? *Depende pa din.* I have a lot of favorite songs *eh.* "Fallin'" by Mya
The song I sing when I'm naked? Depends on what song is playing. *haha*
The song I sing when I'm sad. "Life On Life!"
The song I sing when I feel super is? "Send One Your Love" :)
I dedicate this super song to? My boyfriend



ERIK SANTOS

If I was a musical jukebox, I would churn out? "Be My Lady"
My Graduation song is? "Our Paths Will Meet Again"
The song from my high school that I cannot forget is? "Your Love" — It was my song for my first girlfriend.
My musical influence: Martin Nievera, Gary Valenciano, R. Kelly, Luther Vandross
My title is? Prince of Pop
The song I sing when I'm sleeping? MYMP songs
The song I sing when I'm naked? Jumbo Hotdog
The song I sing when I'm happy? Happy
The song I sing when I'm sad? [illegible] Believe
The song I sing when I feel super is? I Believe I Can Fly
I dedicate this super song to? My son

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K AND THE BOXERS

(K Brosas answers for the group)
If I was a musical juke box, I would churn out? "Sasakyan Kita"
My Graduation song is? "Farewell"
The song from my high school that I cannot forget is? "Eternal Flame" – So popular that time. *Bugbog sarado na ang kaligtasan ko.*
My musical influence? My mom, *medyo* slight *lang.*
Our title is? The Total Performer
The song I sing when I'm sleeping? *Wala, hindi ako makatulog.*
The song I sing when I'm naked? "(You Make Me Feel) Like A Natural Woman"
The song I sing when I'm happy is? "If You're Happy" & "You Know It Clap Your Hands"
The song I sing when I'm sad? "I Will Survive"
The song I sing when I feel super is? "Fame"
I dedicate this super song to? Myself

Photos by Jenna Genio
Makeup by Jigs Mayuga for Shu Uemura
Shot on location at Club Mwah
Sittings Editor: David Milan

Kyla, Frenchie, K and the Boxers, Kim and Erik Santos and the Summer Musical Caravan will be making a stop at a venue near you

r! Show

KIM FLORES

If I was a musical juke box, I would churn out? "Something at First Sight"
My Graduation song is? "Breakaway"
The song from my high school that I cannot forget is? "Officially Missing You" Because it's my bestfriend's favorite song
My musical influence? Mariah Carey
My title is? Backroom Baby / Teen Diva
The song I sing when I'm sleeping? "Come A Little Closer"
The song I sing when I'm naked? [illegible]
The song I sing when I'm happy? "Happy"
The song I sing when I'm sad? [illegible] Again
The song I sing when I feel super? "Semi-Charmed Life"
I dedicate this super song to? My friends

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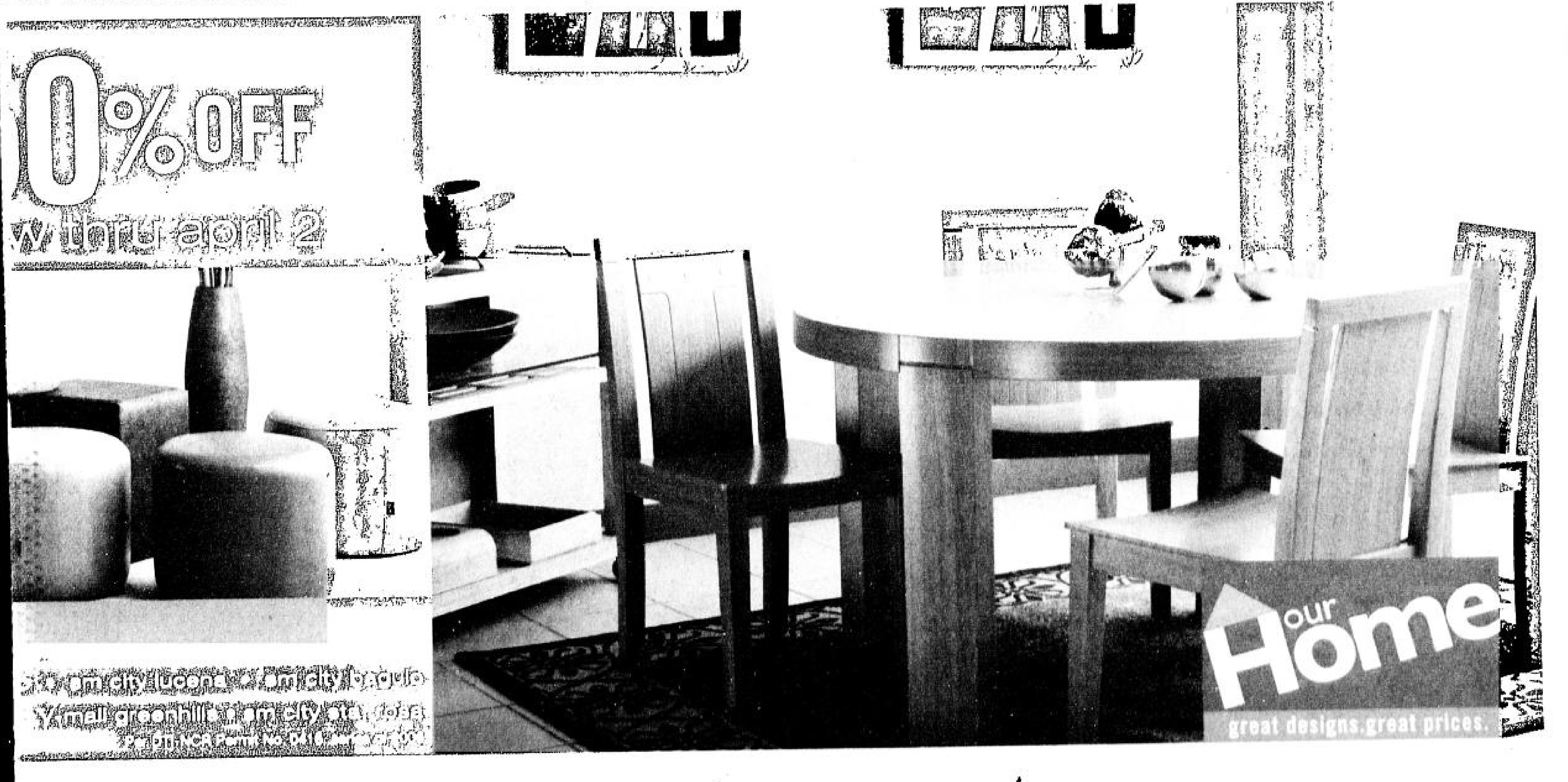
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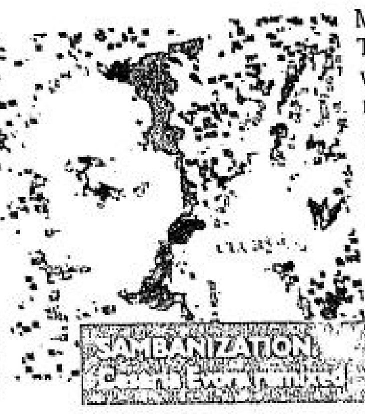
FRANZ FERDINAND FRIENDLY. Brooklyn's We Are Scientists

Exotica

From page E1

aficionados can slobber over the cerebral British quintet's "Subterranean Homesick Alien," for example, without feeling like they're listening to a novelty song.

The simple name Stars belies this Montreal-based quartet's influence. Vocalists Amy Millan and Torquil Campbell sing lyrics that are both dreamy and dark, evoking the sound of Welsh rockers Super Furry Animals and the image of that huge demonic bunny from "Donnie Darko." Their 2003 release "Heart" is a clever classic and if you want more, I suggest the passionate follow-up, "Set Yourself On Fire." A Stars offshoot is Amy Millan's solo album, "Honey From The Tombs," due sometime in May. A perfect way to soundtrack end-of-the-night magic, her track "Skinny Boy" is currently available as a free download on most peer-to-peer websites.



Selectronica

For more than two decades, Cape Verdean singer Cesaria Evora has turned out stunning renditions of traditional Portuguese mourning songs and uplifting samba-like tunes from her childhood. It was only a matter of time before a band of DJs, producers, and other such masterminds tailored her source material to their urbane literati needs. The result is "Club Sodade," a hypnotic if somewhat uneven collection of updates by the likes of Detroit revolutionary Carl Craig and techno pioneer Francois K. In my opinion, the best remix is by kitsch king Señor Coconut. His stop-start spin on "Besame Mucho" is something you root for rather than roll your eyes at.

But if you want something more tight and polished, the most recent "Verve Remixed" compilations should give you that post-orgasmic chill. Again, dance floor deities such as Felix Da Housecat, Layo & Bushwacka, and Masters At Work mine the vaults of one of the premier '50s and '60s jazz labels, performing sleights-of-hand on songs by Billie Holiday, Nina Simone, and Dizzy Gillespie. You probably haven't heard of any of them, but trust me, the low-key luster of the old-school recordings always manages to shine through, defying pop cultural stereotypes and making the collection fascinating to club scenesters and jazz kiddos alike.

Nice and noisy

We Are Scientists may look and sound European but the Franz Ferdinand-friendly legends-to-be are actually from Brooklyn. Their maiden effort, "With Love and Squalor," is a grab bag of hijinks, stuffing 13 power-punk-pop nuggets into an impressive 36 minutes. I discovered my now-fave "Nobody Move, Nobody Get Hurt" during a trans-Pacific flight and I couldn't help but celebrate that "Aha!" moment by pogo-dancing. In my head, that is. Dance punk isn't dead yet, no matter what they say.

be your own PET's "Damn Damn Leash" is another endearingly noisy single that would make the Yeah Yeah Yeahs' Karen O proud. Perfect for middle school food fights, byoP's cartoony sound—bursts of ADHD genius—have made them required listening for nongeneric youth. "Let's Get Sandy" is, like the buzz band, pure antiyuppie, under-20 energy. Pay attention to the typography.

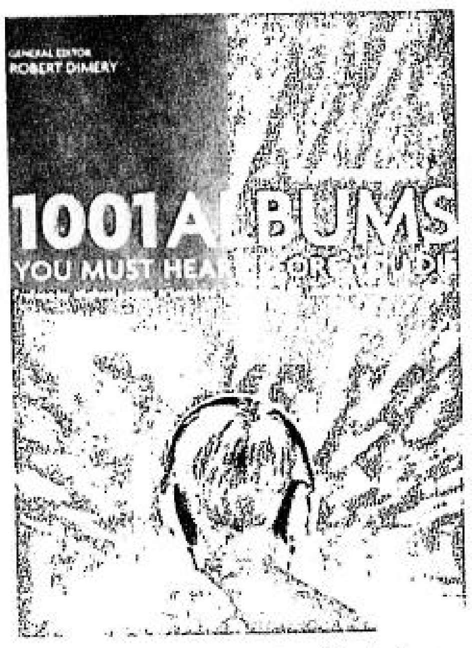
Hasidic harmonies

Hasidic reggae may sound hilariously askew, but save some iPod space for Matisyahu and you'll find out it's the intangible entertainment variable that counts. The goody-goody themes of their compositions, like spiritual living and kindness, may strike audio delinquents as heavy-handed. However, guitarist Aaron Dugan, drummer Jonah David, and singing dude Matthew Miller—yup, they're a bona fide band—made sure their CD, "Youth," is anything but. Instead, they point out the shared roots of benevolent Talmudic teachings and free-flowing Jamaican rhythms. Start off with the engaging "King Without A Crown," a track that existed just under the radar until MTV started playing the video. Two words for y'all: frighteningly cool.

Audio galaxy

There's a world of sound out there waiting to be discovered. Kick off your independent evolution with the following.

1. 1001 Albums You Must Hear Before You Die



Who knew awesome music existed before, like, 2003? Well, close to 100 contributors surely did. Spanning a cross-section of genres, artists, and eras, this bible-thick volume cherry-picks the good stuff from Frank Sinatra to The White Stripes. You can try to overdose on music but as it turns out, you really just can't.

P1799, available at Fully Booked Power Plant Mall, Gateway Mall and Greenhills Promenade.

2. Pitchforkmedia.com

Forward-thinking monstrosities unite! Everything you want from the indie underbelly—and sometimes even the friendly mainstream—is here. Read music geek updates! Download demo recordings! Be more intellectual than your friends!

3. Popmatters.com

Lo-fi, mid-fi, hi-fi, whatever. The thumbnail description for Popmatters would be this: It's the pop culture website for thinking young people. Amen.

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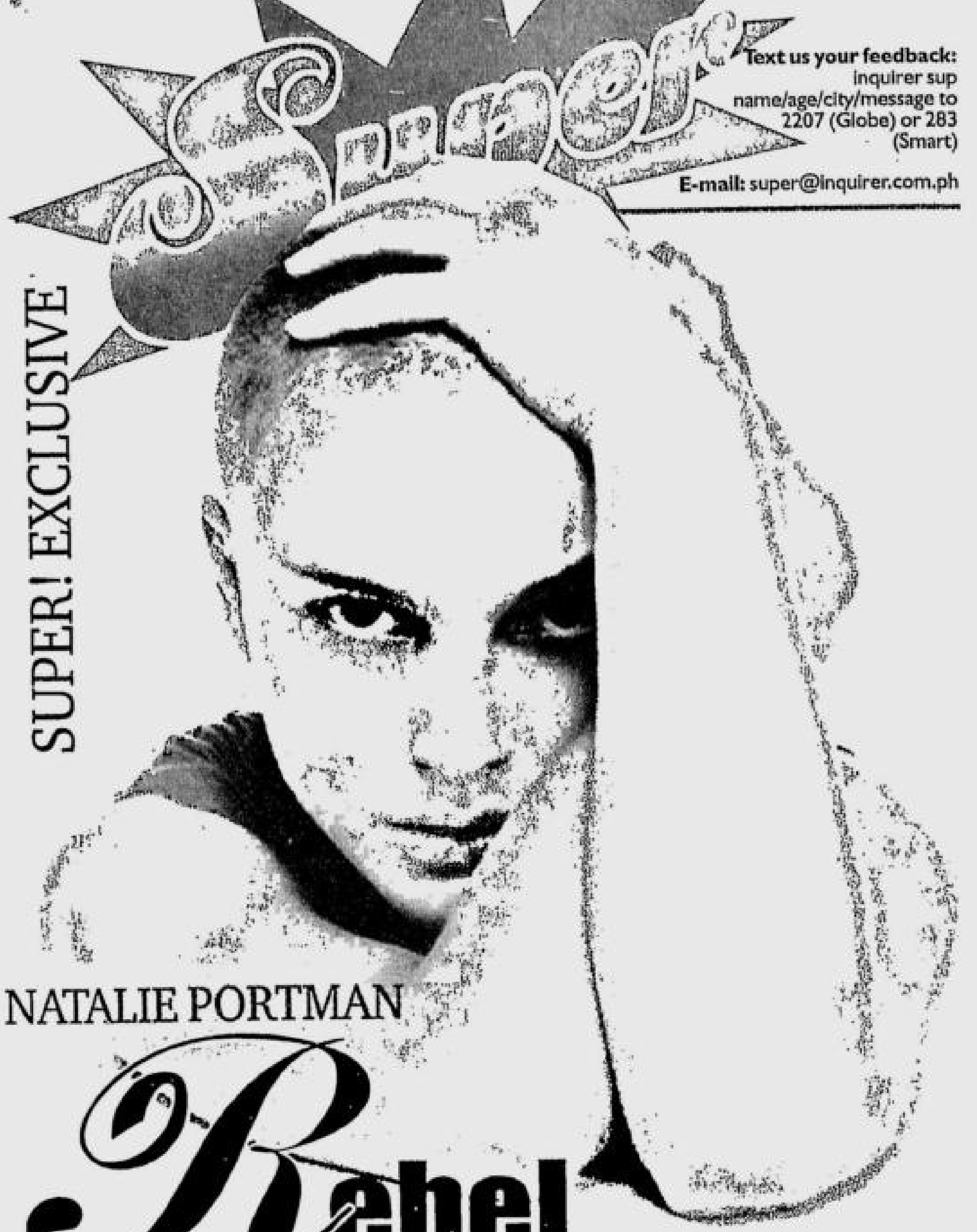

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SUPER! EXCLUSIVE

NATALIE PORTMAN

Rebel with a cause

By Alexis L. Loinaz
Contributor

A TYRANNICAL GOVERNment. Political imprisonment. State-sanctioned curfews. An underground rebellion. Propaganda. Sedition. Oppression.

The movie is "V for Vendetta," and the setting is a fictional England ruled by a Fascist dictator. But with its volatile themes and strong political point of view, the film could just as well have been a spot-on allegory for the Philippines' own socio-political context: Spanish colonialization, foreign imperialism, Martial Law-era human-rights abuses, civilian revolution.

Set in the not-too-distant future, the film shows us a country living in fear of its government, which controls everything from the media to civil liberties. Amid the turmoil, a lone vigilante known simply as "V" attempts to overthrow the government using terrorist-like tactics.

Enter Natalie Portman, who plays V's inadvertent ally and helps him further his agenda. To date, it's the most political film the acclaimed actress has taken on, and it represents yet another step in Portman's growth as one of Hollywood's more compelling young actresses.

From the moment she caught the attention of audiences in 1994 in the "The Profession-..

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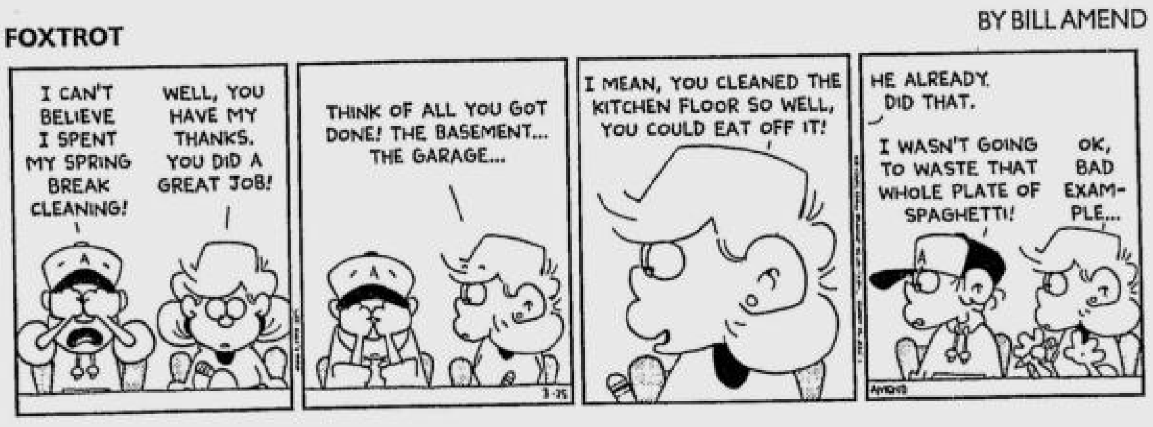
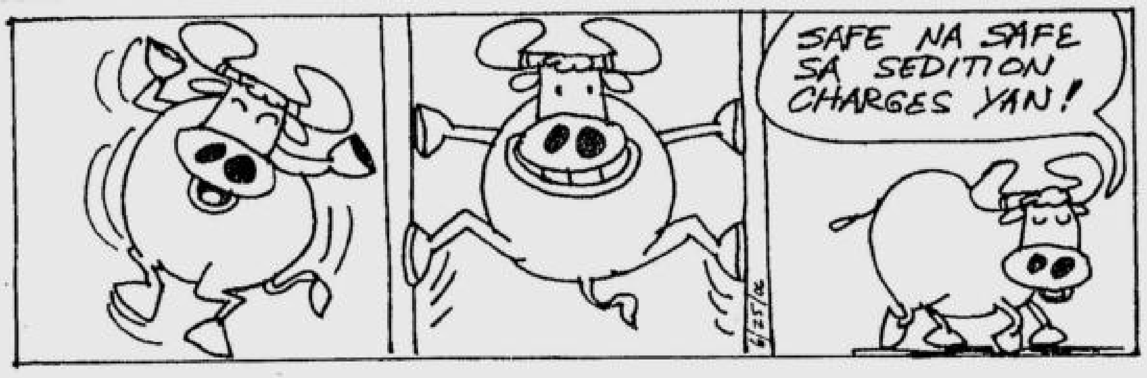
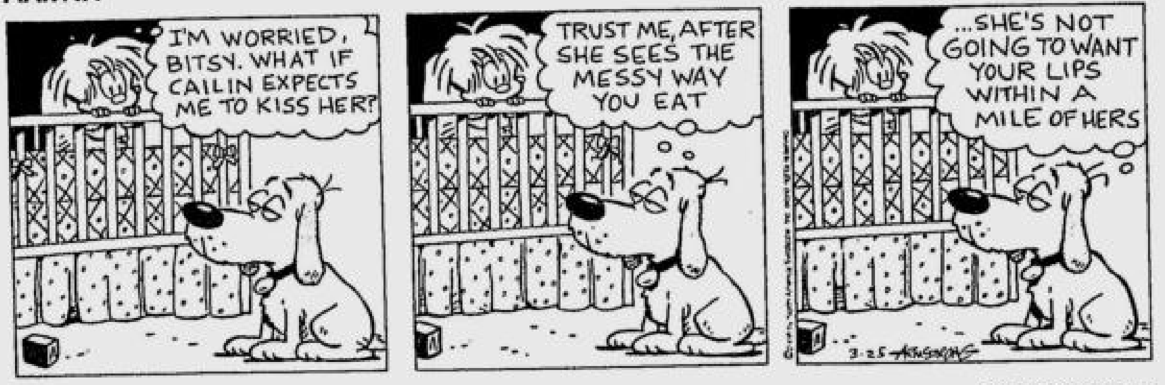

I CAN'T BELIEVE I SPENT MY SPRING BREAK CLEANING!
WELL, YOU HAVE MY THANKS. YOU DID A GREAT JOB!
THINK OF ALL YOU GOT DONE! THE BASEMENT... THE GARAGE...
I MEAN, YOU CLEANED THE KITCHEN FLOOR SO WELL, YOU COULD EAT OFF IT!
HE ALREADY DID THAT.
I WASN'T GOING TO WASTE THAT WHOLE PLATE OF SPAGHETTI!
OK, BAD EXAMPLE...

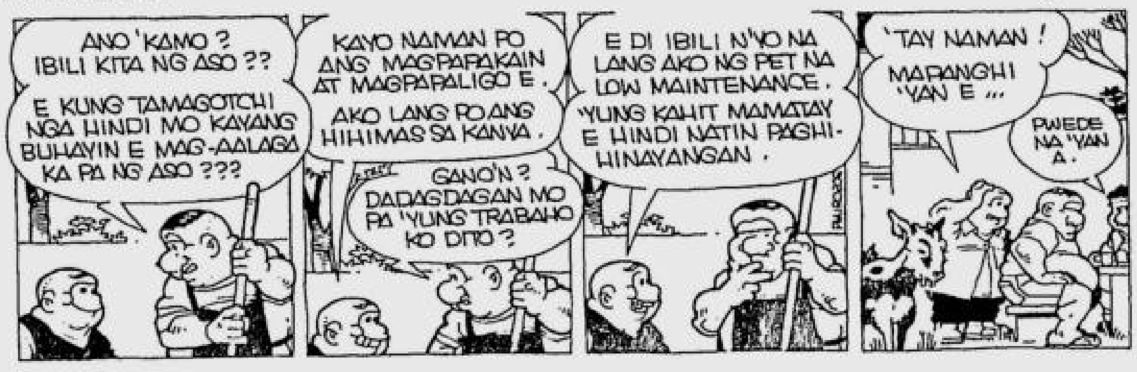
A. LIPIN BY JESS ABRERA


SAFE NA SAFE SA SEDITION CHARGES YAN!

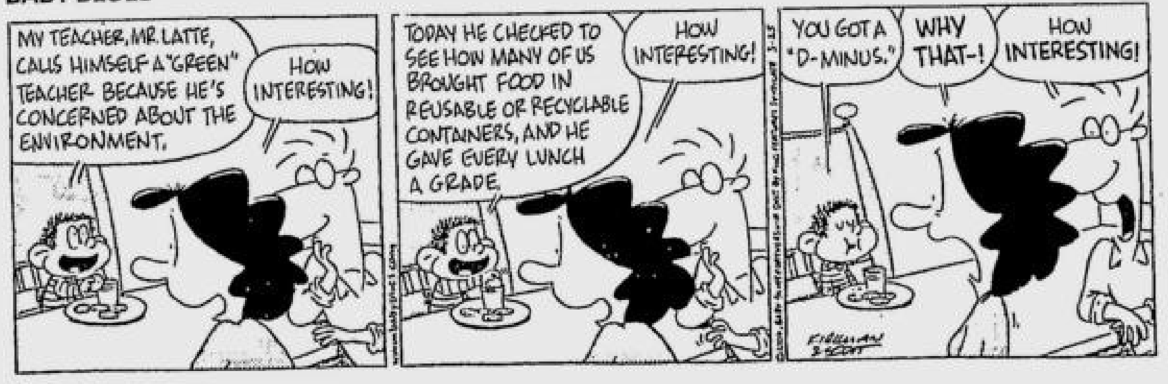
MARVIN BY TOM ARMSTRONG


I'M WORRIED, BITSY. WHAT IF CAILIN EXPECTS ME TO KISS HER?
TRUST ME, AFTER SHE SEES THE MESSY WAY YOU EAT
...SHE'S NOT GOING TO WANT YOUR LIPS WITHIN A MILE OF HERS

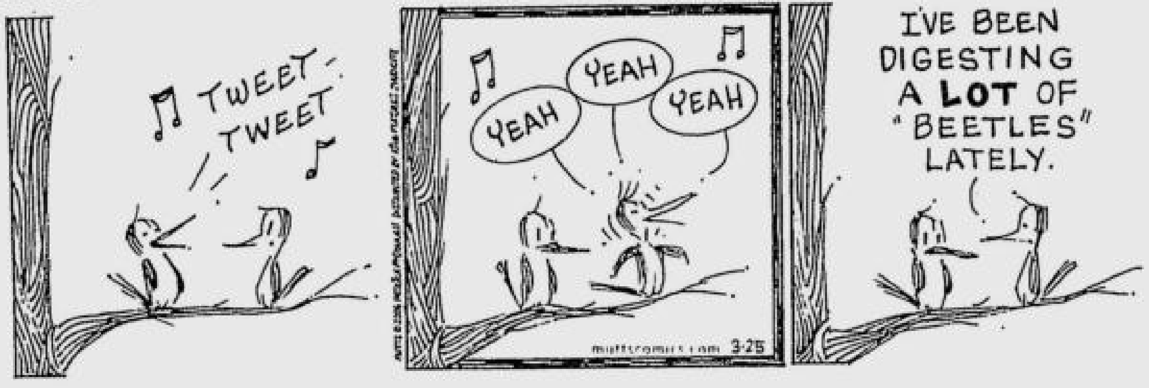
PUGAD BABOY BY P.M. JUNIOR


ANO 'KAMO ? IBILI KITA NG ASO ??
E KUNG TAMAGOTCHI NGA HINDI MO KAYANG BUHAYIN E MAG-AALAGA KA PA NG ASO ???
KAYO NAMAN PO ANG MAGPAPAKAIN AT MAGPAPALIGO E.
AKO LANG PO ANG HIHIMAS SA KANYA.
GANO'N ? DADAGDAGAN MO PA 'YUNG TRABAHO KO DITO ?
E DI IBILI N'YO NA LANG AKO NG PET NA LOW MAINTENANCE.
'YUNG KAHIT MAMATAY E HINDI NATIN PAGHI-HINAYANGAN.
'TAY NAMAN !
MARANGHI 'YAN E ...
PWEDE NA 'YAN A.

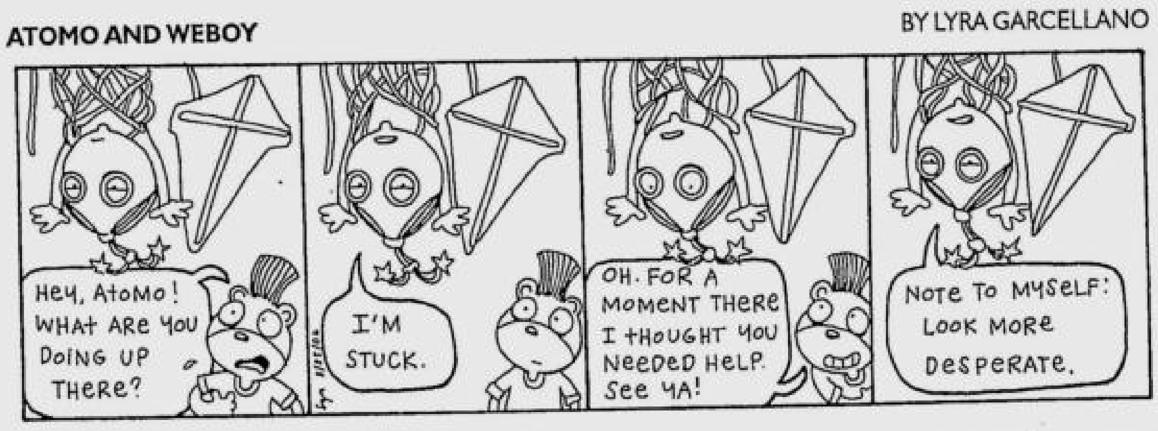
BABY BLUES BY JERRY SCOTT


MY TEACHER, MR. LATTE, CALLS HIMSELF A "GREEN" TEACHER BECAUSE HE'S CONCERNED ABOUT THE ENVIRONMENT.
HOW INTERESTING!
TODAY HE CHECKED TO SEE HOW MANY OF US BROUGHT FOOD IN REUSABLE OR RECYCLABLE CONTAINERS, AND HE GAVE EVERY LUNCH A GRADE.
HOW INTERESTING!
YOU GOT A "D-MINUS."
WHY THAT-!
HOW INTERESTING!

MUTTS BY PATRICK McDONNELL

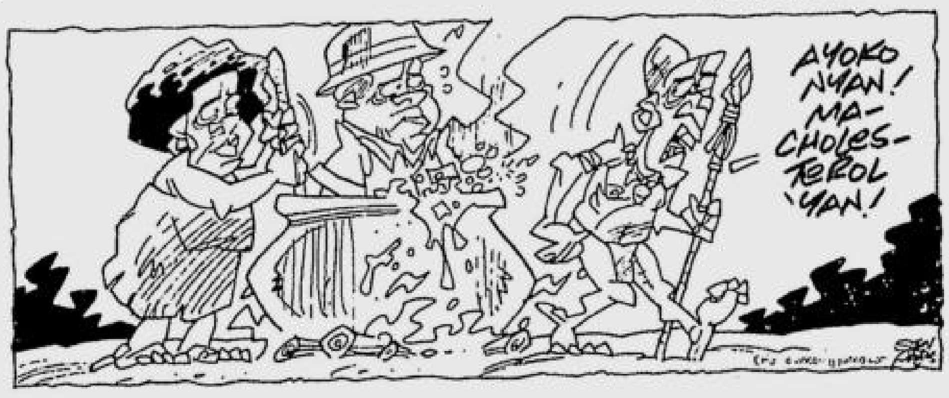

TWEET TWEET
YEAH
YEAH
YEAH
mutts comics.com 3-25
I'VE BEEN DIGESTING A LOT OF "BEETLES" LATELY.

ATOMO AND WEBOY BY LYRA GARCELLANO


Hey, Atomo! What are you doing up there?
I'm stuck.
Oh. For a moment there I thought you needed help. See ya!
Note to myself: Look more desperate.

DIVINE COMEDY BY STEVEN PABALINAS

ALAM MONG TUMATANDA KA NA KUNG
....
"PICKY" KA NA MASYADO SA MGA KINAKAIN MO


AYOKO NYAN! MA-CHOLES-TEROL 'YAN!

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You're highly energetic! You appreciate the arts, beauty and pristine nature. You work well alone and also with groups. Many of you hit your stride later in life. You are a trusted and loyal friend. Now it is time to wrap up something you've been involved with for about nine years. Create space for something new!
Birthdate of: Gloria Steinem, activist/writer; Sir Elton John, singer; Aretha Franklin, singer.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Your efforts on behalf of a group, or to help one friend in particular, will be successful today. You're willing to work, and you want your actions to make a difference.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): You have always loved beautiful things (especially antiques). Today is a good day to push the limit and buy something quite luxurious. You're one person who will appreciate it.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): It's easy to be kind and considerate to others today. In fact, you want to work on behalf of someone else. Because you see people who are needy and less fortunate, you want to help in some way.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): You feel quite selfless today. You have no trouble putting the needs of others before your own. In fact, it makes you feel good to be able to help someone.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): You're a generous sign. You particularly like to help children when you can. Today you might be able to join forces with groups or friends to make a difference in the life of young people.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Work related to photography, film, the movies, high fashion and the glamour industry will be very successful today. You have a definite idea about what you want to achieve.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): This is a wonderful day to make plans for a vacation or some kind of exciting getaway or adventure. Publishing, the media and higher education hold much promise now!

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): You definitely want to use your resources and perhaps the resources of others to help someone, perhaps a family member, today. This is wise. Never miss an opportunity to practice kindness.

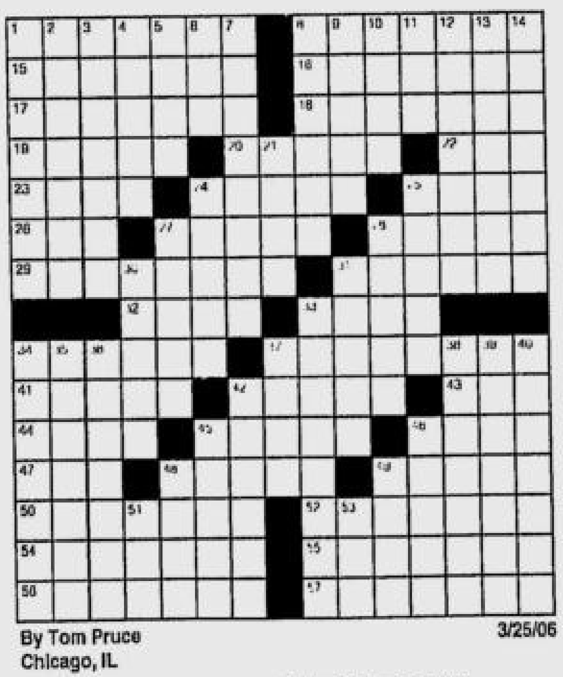
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): You feel very sympathetic to a partner or close friend today. You're willing to listen; you're willing to help. (Good.)

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): You're in a position to help a coworker today. Show your support and offer sympathy or assistance. You won't regret giving a helping hand.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): This is a marvelous day for creative activities. It's also a wonderful day for romance, love affairs and harmless flirtations. Enjoy!

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): You want to make improvements to where you live. These could be practical, tangible improvements to your home, or improvements to family relationships.

DAILY CROSSWORD



By Tom Pruce
Chicago, IL
3/25/06

ACROSS
1 Longhand style
8 Proximal
15 Mid-ocean
16 Director Teshigahara
17 Ways up
18 Stretchy
19 Ermine in a light coat
20 Immune system member
22 Press coverage
23 Lecture
24 Returned from dreamland
25 Wicked
26 Self-regard
27 Frightening
28 Solfeggio
29 Tape over
31 Gene and Grace
32 Harrison or Henry
33 Magnani or Pavlova
34 King Arthur's paradise
37 Planting occasion
41 Brief summation
42 Pierces with horns
43 Bit
44 Casual talk
45 Trojan War epic
46 Turner of films
47 Concealed
48 Young salmon
49 Top Olympic medals
50 Polar features
52 Basque or Spaniard
54 Author Leonard and others
55 Tell the story
56 In an unkempt manner
57 More seasick or jealous?

DOWN
1 Roller ___
2 Steal limelight
3 Change hues
4 Move furtively
5 Money ___ everything!
6 VFW member
7 Toward the rising sun
8 Impudent
9 French textile center
10 By mouth
11 Mayday letters
12 Summery
13 In a glossy manner
14 Makes laugh
21 Firewood unit
24 Potential oak
25 Dazzling success
27 Reporter's exclusive
28 Transmits
30 Key of "Eroica"
31 Delivered a low blow?
33 Supplying blood with oxygen
34 Moore and Bunker
35 Conveyance
36 Educational environment
37 Dirt
38 Venetian, e.g.
39 Authorization to act
40 "Lou Grant" star
42 Sleek
45 Urge to action
46 "Casablanca" co-star
48 Indian gown
49 "Pretty Woman" man
51 $-due mail
53 Musical time unit

Friday's Puzzle Solved

E	K	E	S	■	M	O	R	E	■	R	A	C	E	R
G	L	A	M	■	I	C	O	N	■	E	M	I	L	E
G	E	R	L	■	S	T	L	O	■	F	E	T	I	D
S	E	L	L	S	C	E	L	L	S	■	N	E	H	I
■	■	■	T	A	U	T	■	■	E	N	D	S	U	P
E	N	C	A	S	E	■	C	A	L	I	■	S	■	■
S	E	E	R	S	■	B	O	N	E	C	H	I	N	A
S	O	D	A	■	C	U	R	E	S	■	U	T	E	S
O	N	E	T	O	O	F	E	W	■	C	R	E	A	K
■	■	S	■	D	E	F	Y	■	F	I	R	S	T	S
M	I	S	A	D	D	■	■	L	E	N	I	■	■	■
A	R	E	S	■	S	E	N	S	E	C	E	N	T	S
D	O	E	T	H	■	L	O	A	D	■	D	O	H	A
A	N	D	R	E	■	L	E	T	O	■	L	V	O	V
T	Y	S	O	N	■	A	S	S	N	■	Y	O	R	E

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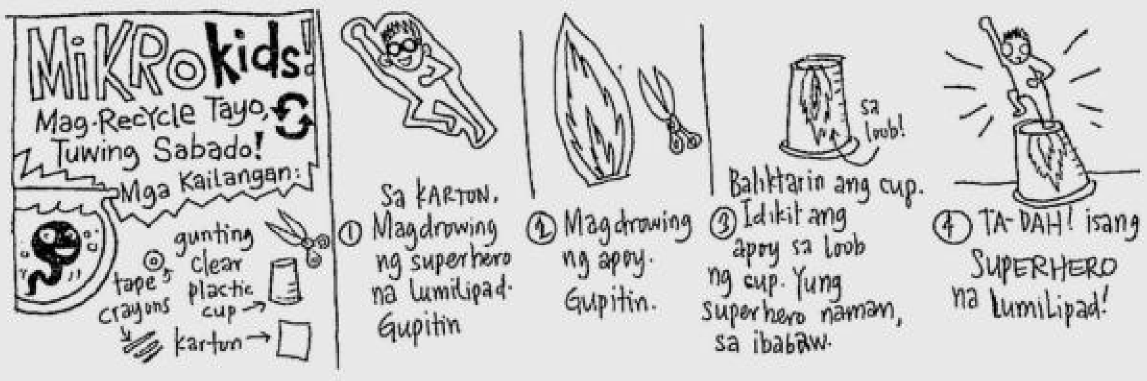
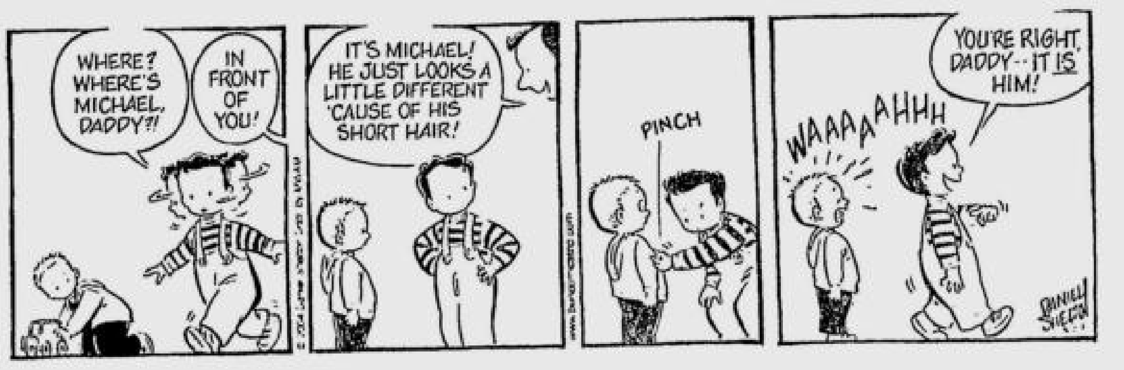
3/25/06

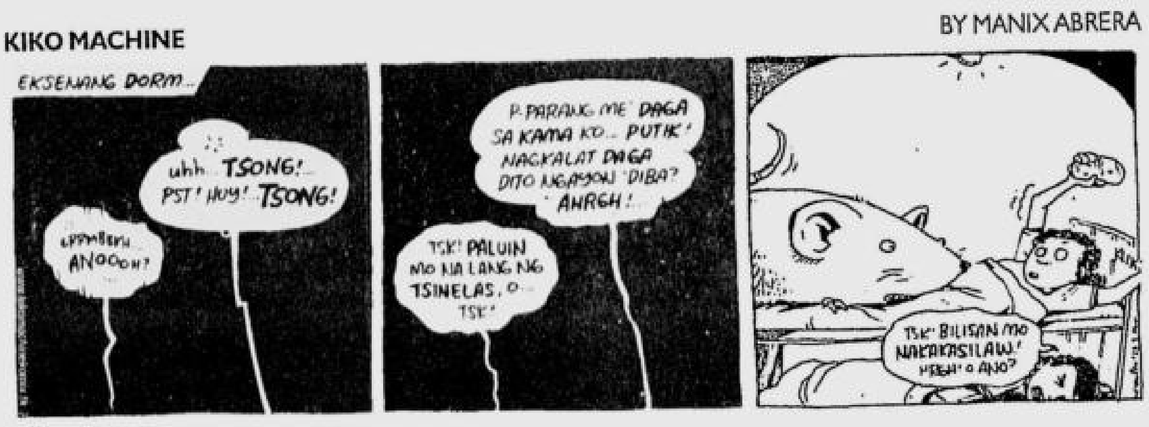
MIKROKOSMOS BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


MiKRokids!
Mag-Recycle Tayo, Tuwing Sabado!
Mga Kailangan:
gunting
tape
clear plactic cup
crayons
karton
Sa KARTON. ① Magdrowing ng superhero na lumilipad. Gupitin
② Magdrowing ng apoy. Gupitin.
sa loob!
Baliktarin ang cup. ③ Idikit ang apoy sa loob ng cup. Yung superhero naman, sa ibabaw.
④ TA-DAH! isang SUPERHERO na lumilipad!

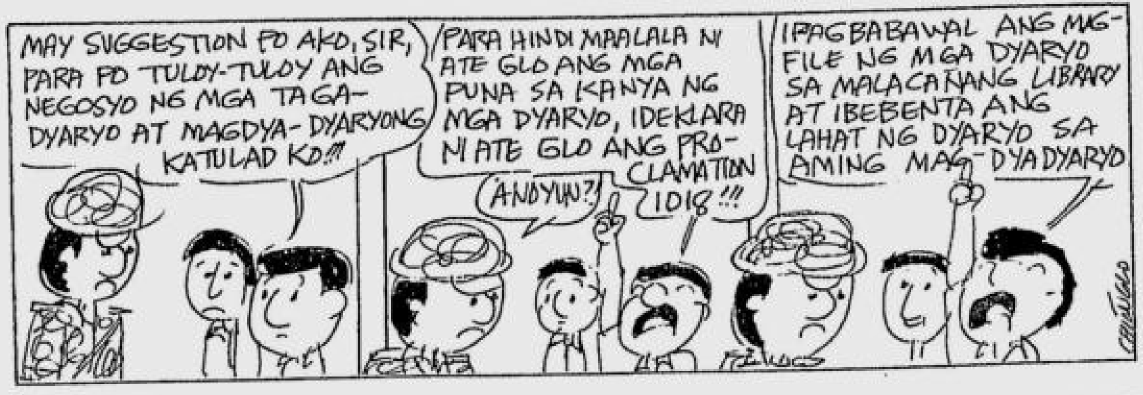
BEN BY DANIEL SHELTON


WHERE? WHERE'S MICHAEL, DADDY?!
IN FRONT OF YOU!
IT'S MICHAEL! HE JUST LOOKS A LITTLE DIFFERENT 'CAUSE OF HIS SHORT HAIR!
PINCH
WAAAAAHHH
YOU'RE RIGHT, DADDY-- IT IS HIM!

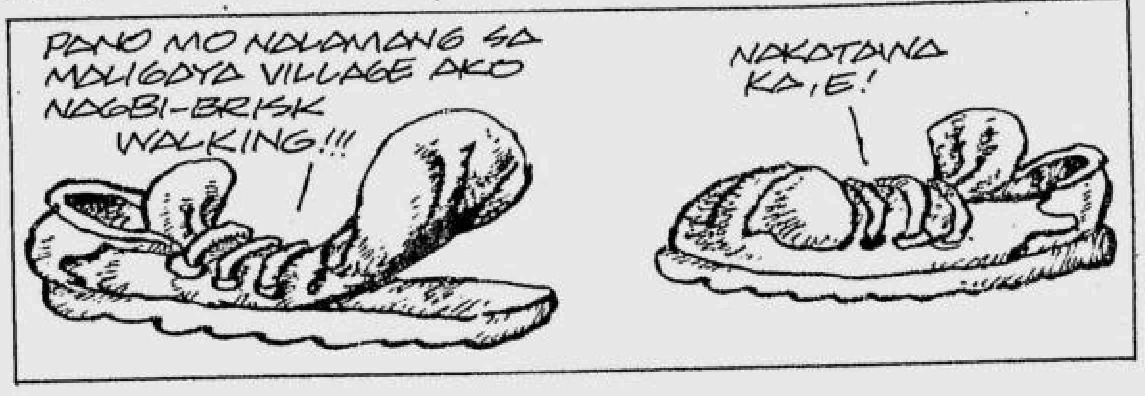
KIKO MACHINE BY MANIX ABRERA


EKSENANG DORM...
uhh... TSONG!... PST! HUY!... TSONG!
ANOOOH?
P-PARANG ME' DAGA SA KAMA KO... PUTIK! NAGKALAT DAGA DITO NGAYON 'DIBA? ANRGH!
TSK! PALUIN MO NA LANG NG TSINELAS. O... TSK!
TSK! BILISAN MO NAKAKASILAW! HEH! O ANO?

LOVEKNOTS BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


MAY SUGGESTION PO AKO, SIR, PARA PO TULOY-TULOY ANG NEGOSYO NG MGA TAGA-DYARYO AT MAGDYA-DYARYONG KATULAD KO!!!
PARA HINDI MAALALA NI ATE GLO ANG MGA PUNA SA KANYA NG MGA DYARYO, IDEKLARA NI ATE GLO ANG PROCLAMATION 1018!!!
ANDYAN?!
IPAGBABAWAL ANG MAG-FILE NG MGA DYARYO SA MALACAÑANG LIBRARY AT IBEBENTA ANG LAHAT NG DYARYO SA AMING MAG-DYADYARYO

TULDOK BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


PANO MO NALAMANG SA MALIGAYA VILLAGE AKO NAGBI-BRISK WALKING!!!
NAKATAWA KA, E!

PHILIPPINE INQUIRER Super!

SCENES from "V for Vendetta"

V AND EVEY. With Hugo Weaving.

Rebel with a cause

From page F1

al," Portman has proven to be the genuine article: A young actress with the acting chops of a Foster or a Streep. Although she's best remembered for her rather wooden turn as Queen Amidala in the "Star Wars" prequels, Portman has been steadily building an impressive *oeuvre* filled with carefully calibrated performances. (Witness her Oscar nomination last year for "Closer.")

Portman met recently with reporters in New York City to chat about "V for Vendetta," and Super! was pleased to discover that the actress actually lived up to the hype. Sporting a new pixie hairdo and a dressed in a well-tailored white embroidered dress, the charming and opinionated actress was refreshingly candid about a slew of hot-button topics.

What's your interpretation of the politics of this movie?

There's many ways to interpret this movie based on where you come from. The government can be Hitler's Germany or Hussein's Iraq. I spoke to a writer from South Korea who was like, "Oh, this is about North Korea." You want it to be a dialogue with an audience and have the audience add to the ideas and the substance of the material.

Were you concerned about this film having an agenda, since its themes resonate so strongly in today's political climate?

I think it's important for people to discuss issues surrounding the usage of violence and how we categorize violence. I think that the characters obviously romanticize it, but all people who use violence against injustice romanticize it. Whether you agree with that romanticization is obviously up to you as an audience member.

How conscious were you about the way violence is used in this film?

The ways we demarcate legitimate and illegitimate violence are so arbitrary. What is the difference between killing someone by accident, like when US soldiers kill Iraqi civilians, [versus] a terrorist who goes in and blows up on purpose? I think those things are important to question.

Do you have anything in common with your rebellious character here?

I don't love drawing comparisons between myself and characters because it's probably a dangerous exercise for me to undertake. Personally, I'm pretty nonviolent, but this has made me ask myself under what circumstances do I think I would be violent. And the only thing I can imagine is, in defense of people I love.

In this film, gay men and women are persecuted. Did you see any connection to the recent furor over gay-rights issues?

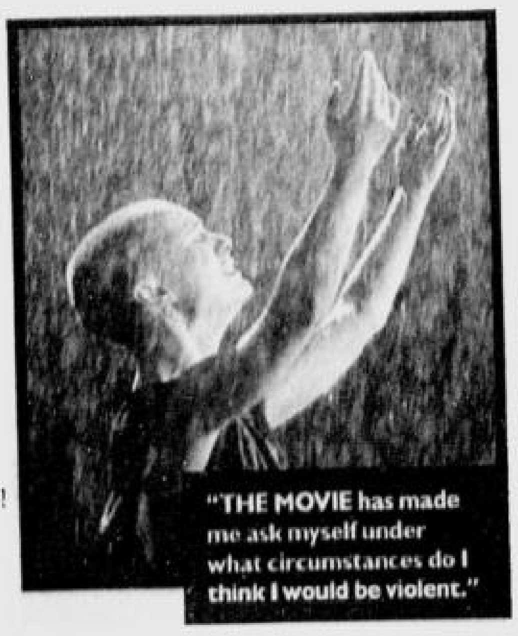
The treatment of homosexuals and how it's used as a political issue is one of the most upsetting things in the United States for me right now. That's so morally reprehensible, and it's completely against what we're taught about how everyone should be respected.

You had to shave off your hair in this film, and it was done in one take. Was that hard for you to do?

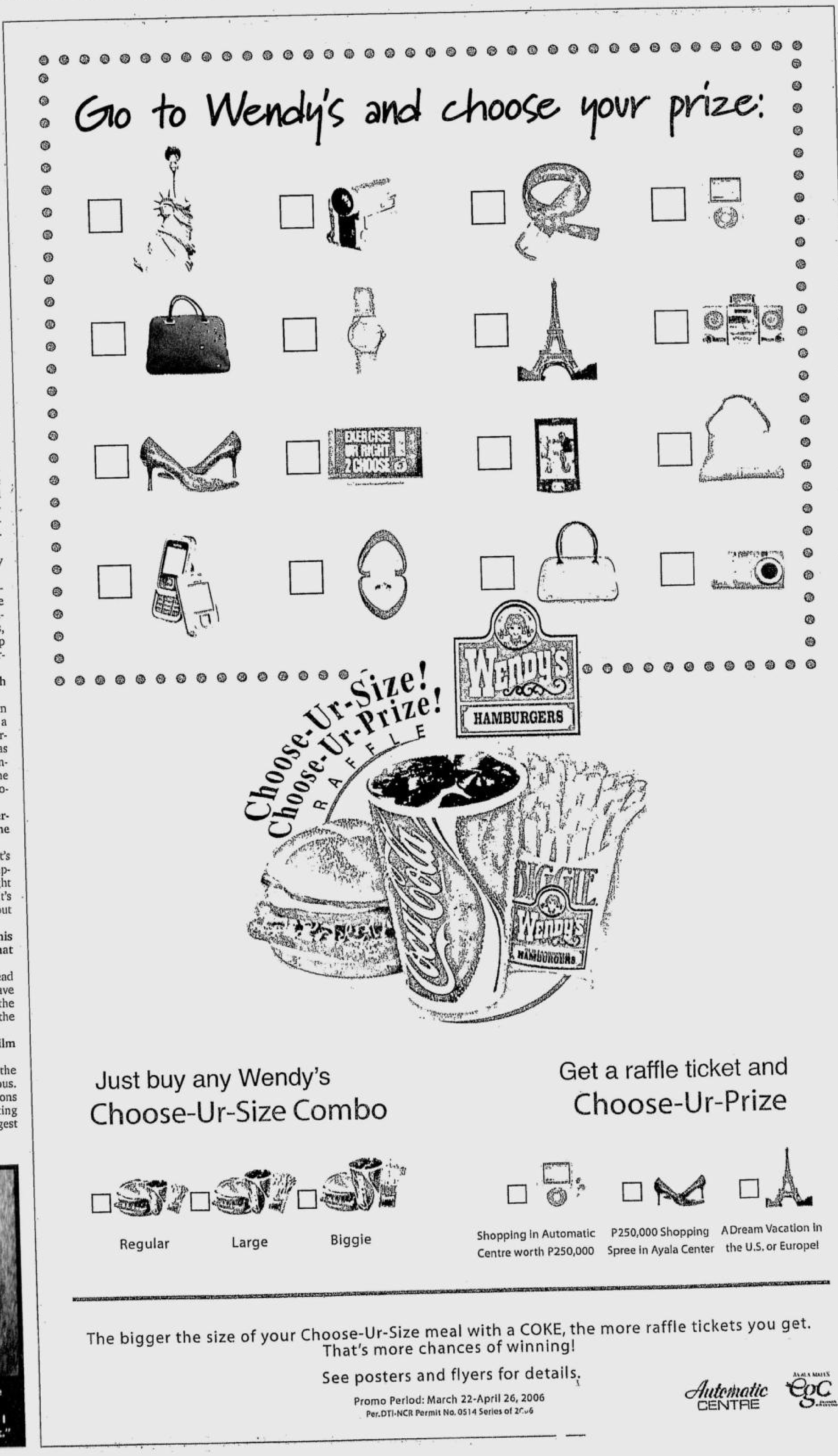
I'd always said I wanted to shave my head but never really had the courage. So this gave me an excuse. The biggest stress about the whole situation was not actually losing the hair but that we only had one chance.

Are you happy with the way the film turned out?

I'm really happy. Usually this part of the process [press interviews] is the most tedious. But this one brings up such different reactions and such different questions, and it's exciting to talk about. And that's been the biggest pleasure for me.



"THE MOVIE has made me ask myself under what circumstances do I think I would be violent."



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Promo Period: March 22-April 26, 2006
Per.DTI-NCR Permit No. 0514 Series of 2006

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I found Venus! (And I wanna romance her.)

By Pepe Diokno

I DON'T KNOW IF I SHOULD admit this, but I now have Giselle Sanchez on my iPod. I have Karel Marquez, Aia de Leon and Loren Legarda, on it too! Oh and I can't forget I listen to Margarita Go-Singco Holmes.

WTF happened to me? Romancing Venus Volume 2.

Romancing Venus Volume 2, comes after Volume 1 (Ohh ...). It features the words of poetess Kooky Tuason, sung by an array of women artists and not-artists (and um, one male.)

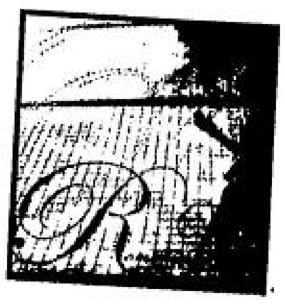
FROM left to right: Venuses of spoken word.

It's a mostly spoken word album; that means people recite the poems with music in the background. There's some great singing on it too—don't worry.

Press for the album says, "every verse (lyric) burns, pure and raw, as though it was ripped from the womb of every woman ..."

Woah.

Woah.



The tunes are cool, y'all.

So at first, I didn't wanna pick it up—spoken word, women—I thought it'd be too heavy for me. But it wasn't.

There are chill songs, and songs to scream to; songs for the beach and the drive there; songs for calming yourself after a night out. There are even songs ... for bathing. But that's just me.

The lyrics are precious. Take, "Tasting the Strange Dripping Of Your Leaving So Soon Inch by Inch Circling My Mouth." It's heavy, but titillating. OK, next sentence.

This CD isn't just for girls. Everyone can relate to lyrics like, "I am scattered/ Like ashes/ Burned by your matches" and, "I am a deep dark secret yet to be uncovered."

The whole CD is iPod-able, I tell ya, even if you have one of those shuffles.

But here's the cherry: A portion of the proceeds from this album goes to the Women's Crisis Center. You can tell the good intentions behind this whole undertaking.

"I saw a woman beaten eaten alive by names too many in number." Help stop this, and enjoy great music! That's a good combo.

Romancing Venus Volume 2 is available at the I Love You store on Makati Avenue, Powerbooks Greenbelt, and Lulu Castagnette Glorieta and Megamall. You can also get them in Tower Records and Music One.

chicco For ultimate outdoor fun! STEP 2

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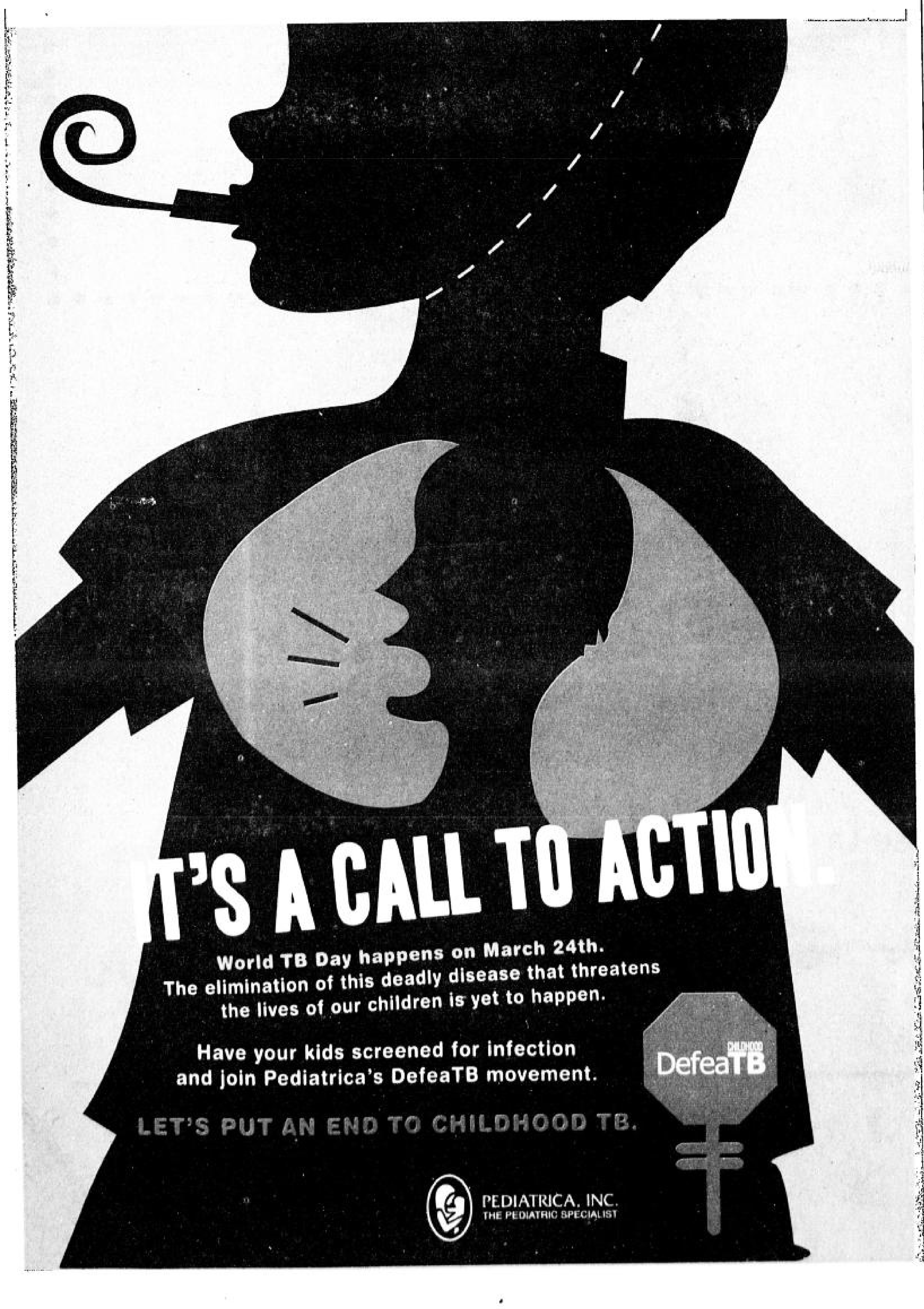

WORLD TB DAY is not a celebration.

IT'S A CALL TO ACTION.

World TB Day happens on March 24th.
The elimination of this deadly disease that threatens the lives of our children is yet to happen.

Have your kids screened for infection and join Pediatrica's DefeaTB movement.

LET'S PUT AN END TO CHILDHOOD TB.

CHILDHOOD DefeaTB

PEDIATRICA, INC. THE PEDIATRIC SPECIALIST

World TB Day Observed

Today is the observance of World TB Day. Tuberculosis, more popularly known as TB, is still one of the leading causes of sickness and death in the Ph ilippines. Worldwide, it is still on the list of global health emergencies by the World Health Organization.

Observing World TB Day started in 1982 on the centennial of Dr. Koch's discovery of the TB bacterium. This year would be the 124th year of that providential discovery. Before this, TB would sound the death knell or anyone who contracted the disease.

Frontline TB care providers are usually regarded as everyday heroes as they are able to save lives and foster a healthy lifestyle for people. Active in the Philippines today is a concerned group that advocates that childhood TB as a major health problem among Filipino children and has been actively conducting a community-based project designed to diagnose, treat and monitor childhood TB.

Spearheaded by the Philippine Ambulatory Pediatric Association and through Pediatrica, Inc's Defeat Childhood TB Movement, this medical program has the strong support of the POTTS Foundation, Alliance for the Control of Tuberculosis in Children in Washington, DC, World Health Organization (WHO), the Department of Health and the local government units where this program is implemented.

The implementation of the pilot program in Santa Rosa, Laguna started in 2002, following the treatment guidelines set by the DOH (Directly Observed Treatment, Short Course or DOTS in children or DOTCh). After two years of diligently finding and treating positive cases, the project was successfully completed last year with 98% treatment success rate.

Through all the program's experiences, it was duly noted that the success of the program is still specifically reliant on the same 5 elements that spells the success of adult DOTS - sustained political commitment, access to quality-assured TB detection materials and methods, proper case management conditions, uninterrupted supply of TB drugs, and reporting and recording that will enable future assessment, learning and replication. With the continuing support of the core group of participating sectors, the program may well be on its way to implementation nationwide. From the government's end, a DOH-issued Administrative Order (#178) establishing a national program for a TB control program in children. Hopefully the successful implementation of the TB control program in Santa Rosa, Laguna, will be cascaded and replicated through support in training and availability of TB medications that will be ensured by the administrative order.

ADVT